CORPUS OF SARADA INSCRIPTIONS OF KASHMIRI

BY

DR.B.K.KAUL DEAMBI

Corpus of Śāradā Inscriptions of Kashmir

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF ŚĀRADĀ SCRIPT

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To
My Father
Late Sh. Kanth Kaul Deambi
who did not live to see in print
this work so dear to him

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PREFACE

Among the ancient Indian scripts, the Śāradā has a pride of place. Though evolved from the western branch of Brāhmī nearly twelve hundred years ago, it continues to be in use even today. It is an alphabet of Kashmir *par excellence* and has also remained a popular script of an extensive area of North Western India and is still represented in the Panjab and Himachal Pradesh by its descendants the Gurumukhī and the Tākarī. Nearly the entire extant Sanskrit literature of Kashmir is written in this script and as such, the importance of its study for the proper understanding and the decipherment of ancient Kashmirian texts now preserved in several Manuscript libraries in India and abroad can hardly be exaggerated.

The ancient Indian scripts and inscriptions have been a subject of study of scholars now for more than a hundred years and many a problem connected with the Indian palaeography and epigraphy has been unravelled. But it is rather unfortunate that no systematic effort has yet been made to explain in detail the origin and the development of the Śāradā script. George Bühler in his monumental work *Indian Palaeography* has devoted one section (pp. 76-77) to the Śāradā alphabet but the very scope of his work and the lack of material has obliged the learned scholar to treat the subject in a very brief and sketchy manner. Leeche's *Grammer of the Cashmeeree Language* (Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal 1894, pp. 399 ff.) also does not give any details of this alphabet. Sir George Grierson's paper in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (1916, pp. 677 ff.) merely contains the tables of ligatures of modern Śāradā and in his note in the *Linguistic Survey of India* (Vol. VIII, p. 254) he simply states that the Śāradā alphabet is the indegenous character of Kashmir and that it is generally used by Hindus and is taught in their

schools in that country. The most valuable contribution is that of Dr. J. Ph. Vogel who has discussed the development of the Śāradā script at some length in his famons work "*Antiquities of Chamba State*, Part I, which must remain for ever an indispensable work of reference to a student of the Śāradā alphabet. However, Vogel's researches on the subject too, cannot be said to be complete for his treatment is confined only to the inscriptions of Chamba. Gauri Shanker Hira Chand Ojha's brief treatment of the subject in his *Bhāratīya Prāchīna Lipimālā* is largely based on Vogel's work. Since the publication of Vogel's work in 1911 a good number of Śāradā inscriptions have come to light in north western Pakistan and Kashmir which have necessitated a revised and the complete treatment of the subject. Besides, no attempt has yet been made to edit the extant Śāradā inscriptions of Kashmir and find out what light do they throw on the contemporary historical and cultural conditions.

The present work is a humble attempt in this direction. It is divided into three parts. The first part contains a detailed treatment of the origin and the development of the Śāradā script. The Śāradā alphabet being a descendant of the western branch of the Brāhmī alphabet, the first section of this part contains a brief discussion on the various stages of development of the Brāhmī of north western India from the 3rd century B.C. to which period the earliest definitely datable Brāhmī documents belong upto the middle of the 8th century A.D. when the Śāradā alphabet makes its appearance. The study is based primarily on the inscriptions, occasionally supplemented by coins found in the north western part of India. The description of the characters has been illustrated by examples drawn from the original facsimilies. The second section of this part deals with the development of the Śāradā alphabet. In contradiction to the view of the earlier epigraphists regarding the conservative character of the Śāradā alphabet, it has been shown that the Śāradā alphabet undergoes sure and distinct changes from its appearance in the 8th century A.D. till its final development in the 15th and 16th centuries and three successive stages of the development of this script have been clearly delineated. The description of the characters has been illustrated by

examples drawn from the published facsimilies and where the facsimilies are not available these have been drawn from the original records. In the last section the numerical notations of the Śāradā alphabet have been discussed with illustrations.

In part II the Śāradā inscriptions that have come to light so far in Kashmir have been edited as far as possible with facsimilies.

Part III contains some useful appendices. In No. 1 a brief description has been given of those inscriptions which have been referred to by several scholars but which are now either lost or completely defaced or lying in the museums abroad. No. II gives the Kashmiri names of the individual characters, medial vowels and ligatures of the Śāradā. The Śāradā inscriptions are mostly dated in the Laukika or Saptarṣi era. So a detailed account of the era has been given in the Appendix No. 3 for the help and guidance of the reader.

The study of palaeography is still in its infancy in India and the study of the origin and development of the important regional scripts of India has not received the attention of the scholars so far. There is practically no standard work on the subject that could serve as a model. Hence the writer would claim some originality so far as his treatment of the origin and development of the Śāradā alphabet is concerned and would find his arduous labours amply rewarded if his treatment of the script is received well by the expert scholars of Indian Palaeography.

While every effort has been made to decipher the inscriptions as correctly as possible, the writer does not claim inflallibility in this regard, the decipherment of an inscription especially the crudely executed one being not always free from flaws and doubtful interpretations. The writer craves the indulgence of the learned scholars for the errors that might have crept in and would feel highly grateful if the same are brought to his notice so that these could be rectified in the future edition of the book.

It is hoped that the work on the whole will benefit those interested in the study of the history and culture of Kashmir and will

interest in particular the students of Indian and Kashmiri epigraphy and palaeography.

I avail of this opportunity to express my profoundest gratitude to my venerable teacher Professor Jagannath Agrawal, a renowned indologist and epigraphist, who first initiated me into the subject and under whose inspiring and pains-taking guidance the section on the origin and the development of the Śāradā script was written. I must express heartfelt gratitude to the Superintending Archaeologist North-Western Circle, Srinagar, Director Libraries, Museums and Archives, J&K State Government Srinagar, Director Vishwa Bandhu Vishveshwarand Institute of Sanskrit and Indological Studies, Hoshiarpur, Librarian Central Library of the Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi for permitting me to consult books and other valuable documents in their departmental libraries and for providing me with all the research facilities. I am particularly thankful to the Chief Epigraphist, Archaeological Survey of India, Mysore and the Curators of S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar and Bhuri Singh Museum, Chamba (H.P.) for providing me with some photographs of the inscriptions for publication in the present volume. My thanks are due to Dr. S. Maqbool Ahmad, Director, Centre of Central Asian Studies, Kashmir University, Srinagar, Professors B.N. Pandit, P.N. Pushp, K.N. Dhar, D.N. Madan, S.K. Kaul, F. Husnain and K.N. Pandita, and to Shri Dina Nath Yach, Late Shri Mohd Amin Mehjoor, Shri B.N. Kala, Shri J.L. Bhan and Shri M.L. Wali for their valuable suggestions and help in varied respects.

I would be failing in my duty if I do not express my profoundest gratitude to my father-in-law Shri Kesho Nath Munshi who has been the main inspiration behind this entire work.

Lastly I am deeply indebted to the Secretary, J&K State Academy of Arts, Languages and Culture but for whose encouragement and financial assistance the publication of a work of this nature would not have been so easily possible.

Last but not least I am highly grateful to my esteemed friend Shri Agam Prasad, Proprietor Agam Kala Prakashan for having undertaken the publication of this work and seen it through the press in the shortest possible time.

Srinagar
Laukika 5057, Māgha, Kṛṣṇa,
Pakṣa Daśmi
January, 19, 1982.

B.K. Kaul Deambi

ABBREVIATIONS

Antiquities I	J. Ph Vogel, *Antiquities of Chamba State*, Part I, Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi.
Antiquities II	*Dr. B Ch. Chabra*, *Antiquities of Chamba State*, Part II, Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi.
ASI	Hoernle, *The Bower Manuscripts*, Archaeological Survey of India (New Imperial Series), Vol.XXII.
ASI. An. Rep.	Archaeological Survey of India, *Annual Report*.
ASR	A. Cunningham, Archaeological Survey of India, *Report*.
CAI	A. Cunningham, *Coins of Ancient India*.
CII	*Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*.
CMI	A. Cunningham, *Coins of Medieval India*.
EI	*Epigraphia Indica*.
Handbook	R.C. Kak, *Handbook of the Archaeological and Numismatic Sections* of S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar.
IE	D.C. Sircar, *Indian Epigraphy*.
IEG	D.C. Sircar, *Indian Epigraphical Glossary*.
Ind. Ant.	*Indian Antiquary*.
Ind. Pal.	G. Bühler, *Indian Palaeography* (Eng. Ed).
JA	*Journal Asiatique*.
JASB	*Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*.

JBBRAS	*Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.*
JNSI	*Journal of the Numismatic Society of India.*
JRAS	*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.*
Kashmir Report	G. Bühler, Detailed Report of a Tour in search of Sanskrit Manuscripts, made in Kashmir, Rajputana and Central India.
Note	J. Marshall, Note on Archaeological work in Kashmir.
Note	Sten Konow, Note on a Tour in Kashmir.
RT	Kalhaṇa, *Rājataraṅgiṇī*, Edited by A. Stein.
ZDMG	*Zeitscrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft, Seipzig and Wiebaden.*

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Section I

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF ŚĀRADĀ SCRIPT

INTRODUCTION

In the second half of the 8th century we find in the Brāhmi alphabet of North Western India a distinct development of new alphabet which, though agreeing in many respects with that used in the epigraphic and literary records of the 6th and 7th centuries, including the famous Gilgit Manuscripts, shows several essential differences in the forms of several characters. This alphabet is known as the Śāradā alphabet. Though an alphabet of Kashmir *par excellence*, the Śāradā has remained for several centuries a popular script of an extensive area of North Western India including Gandhāra or north western part of Pakistan, Ladakh, Jammu, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Delhi. Nothing is known for certain with regard to the origin of the name of the alphabet, but this much is certain that it must have originated in Kashmir which, from earliest times, has been the principal seat of Śāradā or the goddess of learning and has been named after her as Śāradā-maṇḍala or Śāradāpīṭha.

The earliest known record in which the Śāradā characters appear for the first time is a stone slab inscription discovered at the village Hund in the Attock district of West Pakistan. It is dated in *Sam.* 168 which according to D.R. Sahni refers to the Harṣa era and corresponds to 774 A.D. On the basis of this inscription the earliest use of the Śāradā alphabet may be dated about 750 A.D. The alphabet continued to be used in the Himachal Pradesh and Punjab up to the 13th century when it was replaced by its discendant, the Devāśeṣa which in turn gave rise to the modern alphabets of Gurumukhī and Ṭākarī. In Kashmir, however, its use continues to this day though it is confined to the older generation of the priestly class. It is worthy

to note that in spite of the advent of Muslim rule in Kashmir and the growing official patronage of the Persio-Arabic script, the use of the Śāradā alphabet did not lose popularity even among the muslim population of the valley. This fact is amply corroborated by a large number of Śāradā epigraphs now unfortunately badly mutilated and disfigured, and incised on the graves and tombs near the important Ziarats at Srinagar, Vejibror (Brijbehara), Martand and several other places.

Considering the extent of the region over which the Śāradā alphabet remained in use for a long time, the number of Śāradā epigraphic records discovered so far is by no means very large. In all 98 inscriptions have been discovered so far; 12 in North Western Pakistan, 35 in Kashmir, 6 in Jammu, 5 in Ladakh, 36 in Chamba, 3 in Kangra and 1 in Delhi.

On the basis of the Śāradā characters used in these records three successive stages of development of the Śāradā alphabet can easily be discerned. The earliest phase is represented by the inscriptions and the coins of 8th to 10th centuries, the 2nd by those of the 11th-14th centuries and the third and final by the epigraphic and literary record of the 14th and the subsequent centuries.

While the use of the Śāradā alphabet in the inscriptions dates from the latter half of the 8th century A.D., its use in the manuscripts, however, is not known until the 12th century A.D., when we find it first used in a manuscript discovered from the village Bakshali in Peshawar district of West Pakistan. The manuscript which contains an important work on Mathematics bears no date but on paleographic grounds it can be assigned to the 12th century.

We now discuss below in detail the origin and development of the Śāradā script. The Śāradā alphabet being a descendant of the western branch of the Brāhmī alphabet, we would attempt a brief discussion on the various stages of development of the Brāhmī of North Western India from the 3rd century B.C. upto the middle of the 8th century A.D. when the Śāradā alphabet makes its appearance.

CHAPTER I

THE BRĀHMĪ ALPHABET OF NORTH WESTERN INDIA (*C.* 300 B.C.-A.D. 750)

A. THE MAURYAN ALPHABET (*C.* 300B.C.-185 B.C.)

The earliest definitely datable records of ancient Indian writing are the inscriptions of the Maurya King Aśoka engraved on rocks and pillars and found all over India. The alphabet of these inscriptions has generally been given the name of Mauryan alphabet. The upper limit of the use of this alphabet cannot be fixed with any certainty. The lower limit according to Bühler cannot be far distant from Aśoka's reign and must fall about B.C. 200.[1] Besides the inscriptions of Aśoka, this alphabet is also represented by several other records discovered from different parts of India.

The detailed description of the Mauryan alphabet will be out of place here and for our present purpose it will be sufficient to examine the peculiarities of the alphabet then current in the north-western part of India.

The Mauryan alphabet of this region is represented by:

(1) The Kalsi rock-edicts,[2]

(2) The Delhi-Topra pillar-edicts[3], and

(3) The Pathyar rock inscription.[4]

1. *Indian Palaeography* (Eng. ed.), p. 50.
2. Hultzsch, CII, Vol. I, *Inscriptions of Aśoka* pp. 27 ff. and plates facing pp. 44, 50.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 119 ff., and plates facing pp. 122, 123, 128 and 134.
4. *EI*, Vol. VII, p. 116 and plate.

1. *The Kalsi Rock-edicts*

The Kalsi edicts are engraved on a rock situated at Kalsi, a village in the Chakrata tehsil of the Dehra Dun district of Uttar Pradesh. The letters mostly show cursive forms. The following peculiarities deserve mention (see Table IA, Col. I) :

1. The left limb of initial *a* is occasionally represented by a small vertical or a curved line attached to the right hand vertical by means of a small horizontal bar, *e.g.*, Ed. XIII, *l*. 38,[5] Ed. XIII. *l*. 39.

2. *k* has a dagger like form but also shows sometimes a highly cursive form, *e.g.*, Ed. XIII, *l*. 39.

3. The letter *kh* has a big round loop at the bottom, *e.g*. Ed. XIV, *l*. 21.

4. *ch* has sometimes a peculiar shape. It consists of two circles with a small vertical line standing on the point of contact and bearing a serif at the upper end, *e.g.*, Ed. V, *l*. 14.

5. *j*, which is mostly cursive, possesses a loop in the middle, *e.g.*, Ed. XIV, *l*. 22.

6. Amongst the Asokan inscriptions, only in these edicts do we find the forms of *ś* and *ṣ*, *e.g.*, Ed. XIII, *l*. 37 and Ed. XII, *l*. 31.

7. No sings for *r* and *ṇ* can be traced in this version.

Medial Vowels

The following peculiarities of medial vowels leading to later forms may be noticed :

1. Medial *ā* is occasionally represented by a stroke slanting downwards, *e.g.*, in *śā* Ed. XIV, *l*. 21.

2. Medial *e* is sometimes marked by a slanting stroke placed over the top of letter, *e.g.*, in *ge* Ed. XIII, *l*. 39.

2. *The Delhi-Topra Pillar-edicts* (See Table IA, Col. II)

These edicts are engraved on a monolithic pillar which originally stood in the village named Topra in the Ambala district.

5. The line numbers refer to those indicated in the Hultzsch's plates.

The first six edicts display the following peculiarities :

1. Unlike *kh* of Kalsi these edicts show the letter with a dot instead of a loop at the foot of the vertical, *e.g.*, Ed. V, *l.* 7.

2. *j* does not show a loop as in Kalsi, *e.g.*, Ed. VI, *l.* 1.

3. The upper half of *m* is occasionally made cursive; *e.g.*, Ed. IV, *l.* 8.

4. A rare *ḷ* consisting of *ḍ* with a dot below occurs in the Ed. V, *l.* 8.

In the seventh edict, the letters mostly show cursive forms. The following features deserve notice :

1. The curves at the left end of *a* show sometimes greater bend; *e.g.*, *l.* 15.

2. *kh* shows a dot at the bottom of a bent vertical; *e.g.*, *l.* 24.

3. *ḍh* has a spiral form; *e.g.*, *l.* 22.

4. The letter *t* shows only two strokes instead of the usual three, the longer one sloping downwards to the left and the shorter to the right; *e.g.*, *l.* 23.

5. In *y* the two side verticals are sometimes unusually prolonged upwards; *e.g.*, *l.* 29.

3. *The Pathyar Rock Inscription*

The Pathyar rock inscription was found by Dr. Vogel near the village of Pathyar in the Kangra district. The inscription consists of two lines. The characters of the inscription do not display any significant peculiarities except that the letters are of considerable size, the last one being not less than 1½' high.

B. THE POST-MAURYAN ALPHABET (*C.* 184 B.C. TO THE BEGINNING OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA)

The post-Mauryan alphabet of north-western India is represented among others by the following records :

(1) The coins of the Indo-Grecian Kings Agathocles and Pantaleon,[6]

(2) The inscriptions of the Kṣatrapa King Śoḍāsa,[7]

(3) The Kanhiara (Kangra) rock inscription,[8] and

(4) The Bathatsal (Jammu) cave inscription.[9]

The alphabet of these records displays two remarkable tendencies :

(1) the shortening and the equalisation of the upper vertical lines, and

(2) the development of top marks represented by serifs, nail heads or triangular wedges.[10]

Besides, we notice the following developments (See Table IA Cols. III-VI) :

1. *k* occurs in a developed form with bent bars in the Cunningham's inscription of Śoḍāsa, *e.g.*, *l.* 1.

2. The letter *d* shows a cursive form with its direction changed from right to left in the inscriptions of Śoḍāsa, *e.g.* No. 2, *l.* 1.

3. In the same inscriptions we find *r* with a curve at the foot of the vertical, *e.g.*, No. 2, *l.* 4, No. 5, *l.* 1.

4. *ṣ* occurs in a cursive form in the coins of Agathocles and Pantaleon. In the inscriptions of Śoḍāsa and in the Kanhiara inscription it is angular in shape and may be regarded as the precursor of the *ṣ* of the subsequent Kuṣāṇa inscriptions, *e.g.*, Śoḍāsa, No. 2, *l.* 3, Kanhiara, *l.* 1.

6. Gardner, *Catalogue of Indian Coins in the British Museum*, pls. 3-4.
7. *EI*, II, p. 199, Nos. 2, 5, and plates; Cunningham, *ASR*. III, 30, No. I, pl. XIII.
8. *EI*, VII, p. 116, No. 16, and plate. Dr. Vogel assigns this inscription to the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D. *Ibid.* But the forms of most of the letters, *e.g.*, of *da*, *śa*, *sa* agree more with those of the 1st century B.C. than those of the 2nd and the 3rd centuries A.D.
9. Kak, *Antiquities of Marev-Wadwan*, pp. 25-26.
10. The wedges are noticed prominently in the Bathastal cave inscription.

5. The advanced forms of medial *i* and *o* are noticed in the inscriptions of Śoḍāsa, *e.g.*, in *di* No. 2, *l.* 2, in *ni* Cunningham's, *l.* 2, and in *go* No. 2, *l.* 3.

6. The medial *r* consisting of a downstroke slanting towards the left is found for the first time in an inscription of this period discovered by Cunningham at Mora near Mathura,[11] *e.g.*, *l.* 1.

C. THE ALPHABET OF THE KUṢĀṆA INSCRIPTIONS

The inscriptions of the Kuṣāṇa kings—Kaniṣka, Huviṣka and Vāsudeva—discovered from Mathura and its vicinity,[12] illustrate the next step in the development of the Brāhmī of North-Western India. The alphabet of these records displays the following developments (See Table IB, Col. I):

1. The left limb of *a* is occasionally represented by a wavy line, *e.g.*, No. VII C, *l.* 1.

2. The bar expressing the length of the vowel in *ā* is attached slightly above the foot of the vertical, *e.g.*, No. VIII B, *l.* 1.

3. In *i* the earlier three dots are replaced by three strokes one of which is sometimes placed vertically, *e.g.*, No. XVII, *l.* 4.

4. *u* shows a curve at the right end of the base stroke, *e.g.*, No. XXXIV, *l.* 1.

5. The base of *e* is mostly at the top, *e.g.*, No. 10, *l.* 1.

6. The earlier straight bar in *k* becomes sometimes a curved line, *e.g.*, No. XII, *l.* 1.

7. *ṇ* shows several peculiar forms, *e.g.*, No. XVII, *l.* 1, No. XIV, *l.* 1, No, VII A, *l.* 1, No. XI, *l.* 2.

8. *d* displays larger bulge on the right and its lower end is drawn further to the right, *e.g.*, No. XX, *l.* 1.

9. In *n* the base line is curved, *e.g.*, No. XVIII, *l.* 3 or looped, *e.g.*, No. XXXIV, *l.* 3 or made angular, *e.g.*, No. XXXIV, *l.* 4.

11. *ASR*, Vol. XX, p. 48, pl. V, fig. 4.
12. *EI*, I, pp. 371 ff.; *EI*, II, pp. 195 ff.

10. *y* mostly shows a hook, in the left limb, *e.g.*, No. XV, *l.* 1.

11. In *ś* the two side limbs come closer and the earlier slanting stroke becomes a horizontal bar connecting the interior of the two limbs, *e.g.*, No. XXXIV, *l.* 2.

12. In *ṣ* the central bar is sometimes drawn further to the right and touches the right vertical, *e.g.*, No. XVIII, *l.* 3.

13. *s* shows occasionally a loop in the left limb, *e.g.*, No. VA, *l.* 1.

Medial Vowels

The following developments are noticeable in the treatment of medial vowels :

1. Medial *ā* is sometimes expressed by a downword stroke attached to the top of the letter on the right side, *e.g.*, No. XVIII *l.* 6.

2. Medial *i* is generally expressed by a long sickle shaped curve placed over the consonant, *e.g.*, No. IIIA, *l.* 1.

3. Medial *u* is expressed occasionally by a curve drawn to the left and attached to the lower end of the consonant, *e.g.*, No. XVII, *l.* 1.

4. Medial *ṛ* is likewise expressed occasionally by a curve open to the right, *e.g.*, No, XIII, *l.* 1.

5. Medial *o* sometimes consists of two strokes placed over the consonant and rising upwards to the right and left respectively, *e.g.*, No. XVIII, *l.* 3.

D. THE GUPTA ALPHABET (4TH AND THE 5TH CENTURIES A.D.)

The further development of our alphabet is illustrated by the following records of the 4th and the 5th centuries A.D., which represent the western variety of the northern Indian alphabet of the 4th and the 5th centuries A.D., generally called the Gupta alphabet :

(1) The Abbottabad inscription of the time of Kadambeśvaradāsa, (Gupta) year 25 =A.D. 344,[13]

13. *EI*, XXX, p. 59 and plate.

(2) The Mathura inscription of Candragupta II, G.E. 61 = A.D. 380,[14]

(3) The Mathura stone inscription of Candra Gupta II,[15]

(4) The Shorkot inscription of the year 83,[16]

(5) The Tusam rock inscription,[17]

(6) The Lahore copper seal inscription of the Mahārāja Maheśvaranāga,[18] and

(7) The Bower manuscript.[19]

The Abbottabad inscription

This shows the advanced form of *m* with curved left limb and occasionally provided with a loop at the left lower end (See Table IB, Col. II).

The Mathura inscription of G.E. 61

The inscription displays the following developments (See Table IB, Col. III).

1. The length of the vowel in the initial *ā* is marked by a curve open to the left and attached to the lower end of the right hand vertical.

2. The letters *g* and *ś* show flat tops and their right hand verticals are prolonged downwards.

3. A horizontal line replaces the earlier central dot in *th*.

4. The left arm of *y* is looped.

5. *s* shows a hook instead of a circular loop at the lower end of the left limb.

Medial Vowels

1. The curve of medial *i* is lengthened downwards and sometimes reaches the level of the bottom of the consonant.

14. *EI*, XXI, pp. 8-9, and plate.
15. Fleet, CII, III (*Inscriptions of Early Gupta Kings*) pp. 25-27, pl. III A.
16. *EI*, XVI, p. 15, and plate.
17. Fleet, CII, III, pp. 269-70 pl. XL A.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 282-83, pl. XLIII A.
19. Hoernle, *The Bower Manuscript*, ASI (New Imperial Series) Vol. XXII.

2. Medial *u* is expressed as in some of the Kuṣāṇa inscriptions (see above p. 10) by a curve attached to the lower end of the right hand vertical.

3. Medial *o* is also formed in the earlier fashion by two slanting strokes above the consonant, one turning to the right and the other to the left.

Fleet's Mathura inscription of Candragupta II (Table IB, Col. IV)

This displays similar developments in the treatment of medial vowels and shows two instances of medial *au*, formed like the medial *o* of the Mathura inscription noted above, with the addition of a third stroke in the middle.

The inscription, besides, shows the form of *s* resembling that of the Mathura inscription. It also shows *m* with curved left limb which agrees with the form of the Abbottabad inscription noted above, but does not show a loop at the left lower end, as is occasionally the case with the form of the latter inscription.

The Shorkot inscription

The inscription displays the following peculiarities, (See Table IB, Col. V) :

1. The top marks of the letters are represented by hollow triangles and in the letter with more than one vertical, the triangle is placed at the top end of the each vertical.

2. *k* shows an angular cross bar in the middle and a loop at the lower end.

3. *th* in the ligature *tth* is spiral in shape.

4. *n* has an uncommon angular form.

5. *b* shows a bend in the left limb.

6. The form of *m* resembles that of the Fleet's Mathura inscription noted above.

Medial Vowels

The medial *u* and *o* are formed in the same fashion as in the Mathura inscriptions. Exceptions occur in *bu*, *pu* and *kṣu* where medial *u* has been denoted by a loop instead of a curve.

The Tusam rock inscription (Table IB, Col. VI)

This shows a developed form of initial *a* with an open curve in the left limb, which agrees with the later form of the letter.

The letters *m* with curved left limb, *y* with looped left arm, and *s* with hooked left limb, resemble the forms of the Mathura inscriptions.

The inscription shows the rare *ḷ* with two curves.

The Lahore Seal of the Mahārāja Maheśvaranāga (Table IB, Col. VII)

This shows developed horizontal top bars. Besides, we notice *m* with a straight (not curved) left hand vertical, and *h* with suppressed base stroke and with its right hand curve turning sharply towards the left.

The Bower Manuscript

The writing of the Bower manuscript is not uniform and appears to be the work of at least four scribes.[20] According to Hoernle only the alphabet of the parts I-III can be said with certainty to represent the western variety of the Gupta alphabet.[21]

The following forms[22] leading to the later developments deserve notice (Table IB, Col. VIII) :

Initial Vowels and Consonants

1. The initial *a* shows at the lower end of the left limb a curve open to the left similar to one found in the Tusām inscription.

2. In the initial *ā*, the length of the vowel is marked by a curve as in the Mathura inscription of G.E. 61.

3. In *i* the lower dot is furnished with a tail.

20. *Ibid.*, Introduction, p. XXX.
21. *Ibid.*, p. xxxii. The writing of only these three parts is uniform and appears to be the work of a single person who according to Hoernle must have come from Kashmir or Udyana (Swat), *Ibid.*
22. These have been taken from Hoernle's Tables I-III facing pages XXVI-XXVIII, XXXVIII.

4. In the initial *ī* the upper and the lower dots of the ancient sign[23] which consisted of the four dots in the position of a square, have been converted into a vertical stroke with a wedge at each end.

5. The initial *ū* is formed like *u* with the addition of a small slanting stroke attached to the back of *u* near the top.

6. The initial *ṛ* shows a peculiar form.

7. The initial *ai* is formed like *e* with the addition of cursive stroke at the apex on the right side.

8. The initial *o* shows a curved base.

9. The initial *au* is formed like *o* with the addition of a hook at the back.

10. *k* shows occasionally a loop on the left.

11. *ṅ* shows a wedge or a button at the right top end.

12. The left hand vertical of *j* is slightly bent and the upper most horizontal stroke merges with the top bar.

13. *ṭ* shows a flat top.

14. The right and left hand curves of *ṇ* are turned sharply round.

15. *n* is angular in shape and resembles the form of the Shorkot inscription.

16. The loop or the curve of *ph* marking the aspirate is attached to the right of *p* instead of on the inside.

17. *bh* shows a triangular wedge on the left and a cursive down stroke on the right.

18. *m* with the curved left limb resembles the form of the Mathura and Tusam inscriptions.

23. This sign is noticed in the Bühler's Mathura Jain inscription No. 9, *EI*, Vol. II, pp. 195 ff. A somewhat earlier form than that of the present form of the Bower manuscript is found in an inscription from Kulu, of uncertain date, where the vowel consists of a straight vertical, without the wedges, with a dot on its either side, vide *ASI*, *An. Rep*. 1902-3, p. 14.

19. *y* shows a loop in the left limb and the form agrees with those of the Mathura and Tusam inscriptions. Occasionally it is bipartite in shape.

20. The vertical of *l* is sometimes lengthened downwards and the left hand curve is turned round.

21. The *ś* (Hoernle's part VII) occasionally shows a squarish form with a flat top which closely resembles the Śāradā form of the letter.

22. *s* shows in the left limb a wedge which is sometimes open or inverted.

Medial Vowels

1. The medial *ā* is expressed by a curve, or a button or a small downward stroke attached to the right top end of the consonant.

2. The curve of medial *i* is sometimes inordinately lengthened and drawn below the level of the bottom of the letter.

3. The medial *ū* is rendered either by a cursive horizontal line attached to the bottom of the consonant on the left side, or by the subscribed sign for initial *ū*.

4. The medial *ṛ* is expressed by a curve open to the left and attached to the lower end of the consonant.

5. The medial *e* is sometimes formed by a cursive upward stroke placed over the top of the letter. Usually it is expressed by a knob attached to the left top end of the consonant.

6. The medial *ai* is expressed either by two superscribed strokes or by a single stroke combined with a knob at the left top end.

7. The medial *o* is expressed either by two buttons attached to both sides of the top of the letter, or by the two superscribed strokes as in the Tusam inscription.

8. The medial *au* is formed by two superscribed strokes combined with the button at the right top end or by a single superscribed stroke combined with the sign for medial *io*.

Regarding the ligatures:

The superscribed *r* in the ligature *rya* is expressed by a short vertical to which the curve of *ya* is attached in one continuous stroke.

E. THE POST-GUPTA ALPHABET (6TH AND THE 7TH CENTURIES A.D).

In the following records of the 6th and the 7th centuries A.D. found in the north-western India, we find further development of the forms of the Western Gupta alphabet leading to those of the Śāradā in the 8th and the 9th centuries :

(1) The Kura inscription of Toramāṇa,[24]

(2) The Nirmand plate of Mahāsāmanta Mahārāja Samundrasena,[25]

(3) The Sonepat seal of Harṣa Vardhana,[26]

(4) The Hatun rock inscription of Paṭoladeva,[27] and

(5) the Gilgit manuscripts.[28]

The developments and the peculiarities of forms displayed by these records are discussed in detail below (See Table IC).

1. Vowels

1. *a* shows a curve open to the left in the lower portion of the left limb similar to one found in the Tusam inscription and the Bower Manuscript above. In the Gilgit Manuscripts (Col. V) the upper portion of the left limb is sometimes supressed and the curve

24. *EI*, I, p. 239.
25. CII, III, pp. 286 ff., pl. XLIV.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 231-232, pl. XXXII B. The facsimile is not clear enough for a detailed paleographic study.
27. *EI*, XXX, pp. 226 ff., pl.XXIV.
28. Facsimiles edited by Dr. Raghuvir and Dr. Lokesh Chandra.
The forms of letters below have been taken from the facsimiles of the *Śatapiṭaka*, Vol. 10, parts I & II.

attached direct to the top bar. Besides, a triangular wedge at the foot of the right hand, vertical on the left side, often found in the Śāradā, constitutes an innovation. In the Hatun inscription (Col. IV) the upper portion of the left half consists of a cursive than the usual vertical downstroke. In the Kura inscription (Col. I) the letter has an uncommon form.

2. The curve marking the length of the vowel in *ā* noticed above in the Mathura inscription of G.E. and the Bower manuscript is regularly found in the Kura inscription (Col. I), the Nirmand plate (Col. II) and the Gilgit Manuscripts (Col. V). The vowel shows a peculiar form in the Kura inscription (Col. I).

3. The initial *i* occurs in the Nirmand plate (Col. II) both in the ancient triangular form and the later form of the Bower Manuscript with the third dot furnished with a tail. In the Gilgit Manuscripts (Col. V) the latter form alone is used.

4. In the initial *u* and *ū*, the development is marked by the prolongation of the base curve which sometimes reaches upto the level of the top of the letter, *e.g.*, Nirmand Plate (Col. II) and Gilgit Manuscripts (Col. V).

5. The initial *o* which amongst the records referred to above occurs only in the Gilgit Manuscripts (Col. V) shows a slight development from that of the Bower Manuscript noted above. The development consists in the prolongation of the base curve and the use of a wedge at the left top end.

2. Consonants

1. *k* invariably shows except in the Kura inscription a loop on the left and a downward prolongation of the earlier bent bar on the right *e.g.*, in Nirmand Plate (Col. II), Hatun, (Col. IV) and Gilgit Manuscripts (Col. V).

2. *kh* displays significant change in the Gilgit Manuscripts (Col. V). It shows a flat top, a vertical (occasionally furnished with

a tail at the lower end) on the left, and the ancient loop flattened on the right side, to the right.

3. *g* is generally flat at the top. In the Hatun inscription (Col. IV) it shows an upward stroke and in the Gilgit Manuscripts (Col. V) a triangular wedge, at the foot of the left vertical. In the Kura inscription (Col. I) the letter has a cursive top and the left downstroke shows a curve at the lower end.

4. *ṇ* displays marked development in the Gilgit Manuscripts (Col. V). It has no base horizontal line connecting the right and the left curves. The two curves are united and are supported on the right by a small upward stroke. The letter occurs in the same form in the Śāradā.

5. In the Hatun inscription (Col. IV) and the Gilgit Manuscripts (Col. V) the left limb of *t* is suppressed and the right one converted into a curve. The same form is frequently met with later in the Śāradā.

6. *th* is flattened at the top and on the right in the Nirmand Plate (Col. II) and the Gilgit Manuscripts (Col. V).

7. *n* occurs in a developed form in the Hatun inscription (Col. IV) and the Gilgit Manuscripts (Col. V). Its right stout limb has been converted into a vertical and the letter thus closely agrees with that of the Śāradā.

8. In the same records, *p* shows slight downward prolongation of the right hand vertical.

9. In *bh* the right hand curve noticed above in the Bower Manuscript is drawn further to the left in the Hatun inscription (Col. IV) and the Gilgit Manuscripts (Col. V). The left limb is represented by a wedge in the Gilgit Manuscripts and by a small downstroke with a serif or fork at the lower end, in the Hatun inscription.

10. *m* shows generally a straight left limb and a slightly slanting base stroke in the Nirmand Plate (Col. II), Hatun inscription (Col. IV) and Gilgit Mss. (Col. V). In the Kura inscription (Col. I) the letter retains its earlier form with a curved left limb. In the

Nirmand Plate (Col. II) the letter shows occasionally a loop in the left limb.

11. *y* shows both the earlier tripartite form with curved or looped left limb and the later bipartite form, *e.g.*, in Kura (Col. I), Nirmand (Col. II), Hatun (Col. IV) and Gilgit (Col. V). The transitional form leading to the bipartite one is noticed in the Gilgit Manuscripts.

12. *v* shows a flat top and a vertical on the right in the Hatun inscription (Col. IV) and the Gilgit Manuscripts (Col. V). Its left limb is angular in the Hatun inscription while in the Gilgit Manuscripts it is generally cursive.

13. The squarish form of *ś* occuring in the Bower Manuscript part VII and noted above, is also found sometimes in the Gilgit Manuscripts (Col. V) with the difference that in the latter we find a wedge in place of the loop at the lower end of the left vertical.

14. *s* shows marked development in the Hatun inscription (Col. IV) and the Gilgit Manuscripts (Col. V). It differs from the earlier form by the conversion of the hook on the left, into an open triangle in the Hatun inscription and into a wedge in the Gilgit Manuscripts, and by the downward elongation of the right hand vertical. The letter shows a peculiar angular form in the Kura inscription (Col. I).

15. The *jihvāmulīya* has a rounded form in the Nirmand Plate (Col. II) and a triangular one in the Gilgit Manuscripts (Col. V).

16. The *upadhmānīya* occurs in earlier circular form in the Nirmand Plate (Col. II), but shows significant change in the Gilgit Manuscripts (Col. V). Its form resembles *ṇ* with a horizontal line below. The same form is met with later in the Śāradā.

3. Medial Vowels

1. In the Hatun inscription (Col. IV), the medial *ā* in *jā* and *ṭā* has been expressed by a curve attached to the top on the right side. The same peculiarity is noticed later is the Śāradā.

2. In the same inscription, the medial *ṛ* is generally made angular in shape. There is nothing particularly remarkable about the other medial vowels which continue to be denoted in the same way as in the Bower Manuscript above.

4. Ligatures

1. *k* in combination with the vowels *u*, *ū* and *ṛ* and as the first member of a ligature retains its earlier form with a cross bar, *e.g.* in Nirmand (Col. II), Hatun (Col. IV), and Gilgit (Col. V).

2. The subscribed *r* in the Gilgit Manuscripts (Col. V) is marked by a thin upward stroke on the left.

3. *y* as the final element in ligatures is always bipartite in form. Its right end is sometimes drawn as high as the top of the letter, *e.g.*, in Kura (Col. I), Nirmand (Col. II) and Gilgit (Col. V). In the Sonepat seal (Col. III) it has a characteristic appearance.

Virāma is represented in the Gilgit Manuscripts (Col. V) by a slanting stroke on the right of the letter which is reduced to half of its size. The same method of marking the end of a sentence is followed later in the Śāradā.

F. THE POST GUPTA ALPHABET (CONTINUED)

In the post Gupta alphabet of the beginning of the 8th century A.D. represented by :

1. The Bharamaor and Chittrahi image inscriptions of Meruvarman,[29]

2. The Gum stone inscription of Sāmanta Āṣāḍhadeva,[30]

3. The Tur rock inscription,[31] and

4. The Proli-ra-gala inscription of Mṛtyuñjayavarman,[32] the letters mostly retain their earlier forms and do not display any

29. Vogel, *Antiquities of Chamba State*, Part I, No. 5-8, pp. 138 ff., pls. VII-X.
30. *Ibid.*, No. 9, pp. 145-47, pl. XI.
31. *Ibid.*, No. 10, pp. 147-48, pl. XII.
32. *Ibid.*, No. 11, pp. 148-50, pl. XI.

marked development except that the letter *y* now occurs exclusively in the bipartite form. The following peculiarities deserve notice.

1. The length of the vowel in *ā* has been expressed in the Śakti image inscription of Chittrahi[33] in an unusual way by a downward vertical attached to the foot of the vertical on the right (Col. VI). In the Lakṣaṇā image inscription of Bharamaor[34] it is marked by a down stroke attached to the top of the vertical on the right side, as in the Nāgarī (Col. VI).

2. The letter *t* occurs in its earlier form with two cursive limbs (Cols. VI-VII). The advanced form, found in the Gilgit Manuscripts and the Hatun inscription above and occuring regularly in the Śāradā, is not found in the records under consideration.

3. *d* in the Bharamaor inscriptions (Col. VI) shows a short vertical at the right end of the base stroke leading to a characteristic tail of the modern Devanāgarī letter.

4. The letter *n* shows a unique form in the Nandi inscription of Bharamaor[35] resembling the squarish *ś* within a loop in the left limb (Col. VI).

5. In the Bharamaor inscriptions (Col. VI) *m* mostly shows a loop on the left, *e.g.*, No. 5, 11, 2, No, 6, *l.* 6, No. 7, *l.* 3.

6. As pointed out above *y* in our records (Cols. VI,VII,IX), is exclusively bipartite in form, *e.g.*, Bharamaor, No. 5, *l.* 1, Gum, *l.* 4, Proli-ra-gala, *l.* 2.

7. The letter *r* occurs in a tailed form in the Bharamaor inscriptions (Col. VI) and in the Proli-ra-gala rock inscription (Col. IX), *e.g.* Bharamaor, No. 6, *l.* 2, No. 7, 11, *l.* 3, Proli-ra-gala, *l.* 1.

8. The squarish form of *s* is found only in the Śakti image inscription of Chittrahi (Col. VI) and in the Tur inscription

33. *Ibid.*, No. 8, p. 145, pl. X.
34. *Ibid.*, No. 5, pp. 141-42, pl. X.
35. *Ibid.*, No. 7, pp. 143-44, pl. X.

(Col. VIII). In the other records, it retains its earlier cursive form, *e.g*. Śakti, *l*.1, Tur, *l*.1.

9. In *ṣ* of the Gum inscription of Āṣādhadeva (Col. VII) the upper portion of the left half is missing, *e.g*., *ll. l*. 3,4.

10. The letter *s* occurs in our records mostly with an open wedge in the left limb, *e.g*., Bharamaor, No. 7, *l*. 1; No. 8, *l*. 1, Gum *l*. 2, Proli-ra-gala, *l*. 1. An uncommon form with a big loop on the left occurs in the Gum inscription of Āṣādhadeva (Col. VII).

Medial Vowels

Nothing is particularly remarkable about the medial vowels except that (1) the superscribed strokes of the medial *e*, *ai*, *o* and *au* in the Bharamaor and the Chittrahi inscriptions (Col. VI) are highly ornamental and generally show a loop in the middle, *e.g*., Bharamaor, No. 5, *l*. 1; No. 7, *l*. 1; (2) the curves of medial *i* and *ī* in the Gum inscription (Col. VII) and the Tur inscription (Col. VIII) are drawn down below the level of the bottom of the consonants, *e.g*., Gum. *l*. 1, Tur *l*. 1. In the latter, the curves show a characteristic curl at the upper end.

Ligatures

Particularly remarkable among the ligatures is the ligature *ṇḍ* in the Bharamaor inscription No. 7 (Col. VI) where the subscribed *ḍ* consists of a mere loop, *e.g*. *l*. 3.

A link between the later script of north-western India and the Śāradā script is furnished by the Svaim (Chamba) inscription of Rājānaka Bhogaṭa[36] which on paleographic grounds may be assigned to the second quarter of the 8th century A.D. The characters of this inscription are closely related to those of the Śāradā alphabet as is shown by the forms of *ṇ*, *ś*, *s*, which occur with very slight modifications in the Śāradā of the following period. We may discuss the forms of these letters in detail below (See Table I C, Col. X) :

36. *Ibid*. No. 12, pp. 150-52, pl. XIII.

1. The letter *ṇ* occurs with a suppressed base stroke and is found in exactly the same form in the Śāradā. Though this form of *ṇ* has already been noted above in the Gilgit Manuscripts yet our record provides the earliest illustration of its use in the inscriptions, *e.g.*, *l.* 2.

2. *y* differs from its earlier bipartite form by the downward elongation of the right hand vertical and occurs in exactly the same form in the Śāradā, *e.g.*, *l.* 1.

3. The letter *ś* occurs regularly in a squarish form and shows a loop on the left though not so well defined as in the Śāradā, *e.g.*, *l.* 2,

4. *s* also exhibits a later stage of development and comes very close to the Śāradā *s*. Its right hand vertical is prolonged downwards and it regularly shows a wedge or a serif in the left limb, *e.g.*, *ll.* 1-2.

5. This brief epigraph, however, shows an earlier form of *t* as found in the Bharamaor and the Chittrahi inscriptions above, *e.g.*, *l.* 1. The characteristic form of Śāradā, the earlier instances of which we noted above in the Gilgit Manuscripts and the Hatun inscription is not found in this record.

We have studied above in broad outline the development of the Brāhmī of north-western India from the 3rd century B.C. to the middle of the 8th century A.D. The results of our study are illustrated in the accompanying table which illustrates the various stages of the development of this alphabet from its first appearance in the 3rd century B.C. up to the advent of the Śāradā alphabet, the detailed description of which we shall reserve for the next chapter.

CHAPTER II

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET

A. THE EARLIEST PHASE

The Śāradā alphabet makes its appearance for the first time in the later half of the 8th century A.D. The earliest known document in Śāradā characters is the stone inscription from Hund (District Attock, West Pakistan)[1] dated *Samvat* 168-69 presumably of the Harṣa era[2] and corresponding to A.D. 774-775.

Name

Regarding the name Śāradā alphabet, **Bühler observes** that, "The **name Śāradākṣarāṇi** means 'letters sacred to Śāradā'. *i.e.*, Sarasvatī, *i.e.* '(visible) speech'. Śāradā is considered one of the tutelary deities of the country (Kashmir) which is frequently named after her *Śāradā-deśa* or *Śāradā-maṇḍala*. In India, too, writing in general is called *Sarasvatī* or *Sarasvatīmukha*, "the face of the goddess of speech."[3]

Śāradā or Sarasvatī has been the tutelary deity of Kashmir from the earliest times and consequently Kashmir has been named after her as *Śāradā-maṇḍala* or *Śāradāpīṭha*. This as pointed out by Grierson[4]

1. *EI*, XXII, pp. 97 ff. and plate.
2. As suggested by D.R. Sahni, Bühler's statement (*Ind. Pal.*, p. 76) that the oldest known Śāradā inscriptions are the two Baijnath Praśastis from Kīragrāma (District Kangra) dated A.D. 804, has been refuted by Kielhorn, (*Ind. Ant.* Vol. XX, p. 154) and Vogel (*Antiquities* I, pp. 43-44) and the generally accepted date of the second *Praśasti* is Saka 1126=A.D. 1204.
3. *Kashmir Report*, p. 31.
4. *JRAS* (1926), p. 677.

accounts for the name of the alphabet.[5] However, the name itself does not seem to be of very early origin. It does not seem to have come into vogue even as late as the first half of the 11th century A.D. According to Alberuni,[6] the alphabet that was used in Kashmir in his time was known as *Siddahamatṛikā*. It would thus appear that the present name had not yet become popular, for it is understandable that Alberuni who gives a very detailed and the accurate account of the valley of Kashmir would not have failed to mention it. Besides, neither Kalhaṇa nor any other known early writer from Kashmir uses the word Śāradā as the name of a writing. It is only used as the name of a goddess and when conjoint with *pītha*, *maṇḍala*, etc., it denotes the land of Kashmir[7].

Thus in the present state of our knowledge we are not in a position to say as to when exactly the name originated. This much is certain that it must have originated in Kashmir where the alphabet remains in use to this day

The Earliest Documents

The earliest known Śāradā document, the stone inscription from Hund, has been referred to above. Next in date are the coins of the rulers of the Utpala dynasty of Kashmir which belong to the second half of the 9th and the early 10th centuries A.D.[8] The other early records are :

5. Little credence need be placed in the tradition recounted by Elmslie in his *Kashmir Vocabulary*, p. 149 according to which the Śāradā alphabet was introduced into Kashmir by certain Śāradānandana. As pointed out by Bühler, *Kashmir Report*, p. 31) it is nothing but a modern euphemistic invention.
6. *Alberuni India*, trans. Sachau, Vol. I, p. 173.
7. *Cf. Rājataraṅgiṇi* i, 37, iv, 325; *Vikramāṅkadevacarita*, i, 21; *Śrīkaṇṭhacarita* iii, 10.
8. Cunningham, *Coins of Medieval India*, pls., 4, 5; Rodgers, *JASB*, XLVIII, p. 18.

(1) The Sarahan (Chamba) praśasti of a ruler called Sātyaki, *c*. 9th century A.D.,[9]

2. The Dewai (Upper Swat) stone inscription of the Śāhī king Bhīmadeva (*c*. A.D. 940-960),[10]

3. The Barikot (Godun territory) inscription of the reign of Jayapāladeva (*c*. A.D. 960-980),[11]

4. The S.P.S. Museum (Srinagar) bronze image inscription of the reign of queen Diddā, dated (laukika) *sam*. 65=A.D. 989,[12]

5. The Srinagar fragmentary stone inscription of the reign of queen Diddā dated (Laukika) *sam*. 68=A.D. 992,[13]

6. The Brahmor (map Daramaor, Chamba) copper plate inscription of Yugākaravarman (10th century),[14]

7. The Sungal (Chamba) copper plate inscription of Vidagdha (10th century).[15]

We shall now discuss in detail the forms of the early Śārada characters as represented by the records noted above.

1. The Initial Vowels (See Table 2A).

1. The initial *a* retains in early Śāradā the same form as it has in the North Western alphabet of the 6th and 7th centuries. It has an open top and a curve open towards the left in the lower portion of the left half of the letter. The earliest examples of exactly the same form occur in the Tusam inscription and the Bower manuscript.[16] In the Hund inscription (Col. I), the Sarahan Praśasti (Col. III) and the Sungal Copper plate grant (Col. IX) the letter shows a

9. *Antiquities*, I, pp. 152 ff., plate XV.
10. *EI*, XXI, p. 298 and plate.
11. *Ibid*., pp. 301 f. and plate.
12. Archaeological section.
13. *EI*, XXVII, pp. 153 ff.
14. *Antiquities*, I, pp. 159 ff. plate XVI.
15. *Ibid*., pp. 164 ff., plate XVII.
16. *Supra*, pp. 11-12.

wedge or a small triangle at the foot of the right hand vertical towards its left. In the Brahmor copper plate grant (Col. VIII) it has an unusual foot mark consisting of two small strokes forming a fork of an angle of about 45°. This fork is also seen at the top of almost all the letters in this inscription in place of the usual horizontal bar.

2. The initial *ā* in the Hund inscription (Col. 1), the Sarahan Praśasti (Col. III) and the Brahmor and Sungal copper plate grants (Cols. VIII, IX) is formed like *a* with the addition of a curve open towards the left and attached to the foot of the vertical on the right. This curve which marks the length of the vowel is already regularly found in the records of the 6th, 7th and the early 8th centuries A.D., *e.g.*, in the Nirmand copper plate grant,[17] the Gilgit MSS[18] and the Brahmor inscription No. 6 of Meruvarman.[19] It is also noticed in the Bower Manuscript[20] and even earlier in the 4th century A.D. in the Mathura inscription of Candragupta II.[21]

3. The initial *i* is found only in the Hund inscription (Col. 1) and the Sarahan Praśasti (Col. III). It differs from the earlier forms of 5th, 6th and the 7th centuries as examplified by the Bower Manuscript,[22] the Nirmand copper plate grant[23] and the Gilgit MSS.[24] by the much developed curve which is now drawn further towards the left.

4. Amongst the early Śāradā records, the initial *ī* occurs only in the Sarahan Praśasti (Col. III). It has exactly the same shape as in the Bower Manuscript.[25] It consists of a vertical stroke, with a dot on its either side and a wedge at its upper and the lower ends.

17. *Supra*, p. 16.
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Antiquities*. I. No. 6, 1,1 in *āditya*.
20. *Supra*, p. 12.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
24. *Ibid.*
25. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

5. The initial *u* preserves the shape of the Gupta period. In the Hund inscription (Col. 1), however, the curve is elongated even beyond the level of the top of the letter. The Barikot inscription (Col. IV) shows an unusual angular form.

6. The initial *ū* occurs only in the Sarahan Praśasti (Col. I). It is formed like *u* with the addition of a downward curve attached to the middle of the letter on the right side.[26]

7. The initial *e* retains the ancient triangular form but shows in addition a wedge at the left end of the top stroke. In the Brahmor copper plate grant (Col. VIII) it has an uncommon quadrangular shape.

8. The initial *ai* and *au* do not occur in our early Śāradā records.

9. The initial *o* is found in the syllable *om* in the Brahmor copper plate grant (Col. VIII) and has the shape of initial *u* with a serief at the left end of the top fork.

2. Consonants (See Table 2B)

Gutterals

1. The letter *k* retains in our records, the form of the 6th and the 7th centuries as found in the Nirmand copper plate,[27] the Hatun inscription of Paṭoladeva[28] and the Gilgit MSS.[29] It consists of a loop on the left limb caused by the connection of the lower end of the left bent bar with the foot of the vertical. This loop sometimes angular. Vogel's contention (*Antiquities* p. 51) that the left hand loop is more rounded in the older Śāradā inscriptions and more angular in the later ones, may be true in case of the Śāradā records from Chamba but in general we find both the forms used side by side. It is interesting to note that in the earliest known Śāradā record, the Hund inscription (Col. 1) we find the letter regularly with an angular loop.

26. *Supra*, p. 12.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
28. *Ibid.*
29. *Ibid.*

2. *kh* with a flat top, vertical on the left and a loop attached to the vertical on the right, differs very little from the form of the Gilgit MSS.[30] In the Srinagar inscription of queen Diddā (Col. VII), the letter is more cursive and has an archaic appearance. In the Brahmor copper plate grant (Col. VIII) the right limb looks more like *v*.

3. *g* shows a flat top and a wedge, a small triangle, a serif or a small upward stroke at the lower end of the left vertical. In the Sungal copper plate grant (Col. IX) the letter shows sometimes a rounded top.

4. The *akṣara gh* which amongst the early Śāradā inscriptions occurs only in the Sungal copper plate grant (Col. IX) preserves its ancient shape of the Kuṣāṇa inscriptions.[31]

5. The letter *ṅ* which occurs in our records only in combination with other consonants preserves its earlier form as found in the Bower MS.[32] It regularly shows a wedge, a serif or a small downward stroke at the right end of the top horizontal bar.

Palatals

6. The *akṣara c* occurs in the early Śāradā records both in a rounded and a quadrangular form. The rounded form with a pointed projection to the left is found in the Sarahan Praśasti (Col. III), the S.P.S. Museum bronze image inscription (Col. VI) and in the Sungal copper plate grant (Col. IX). The quadrangular form with a knob on the left occurs in the Hund inscription (Col. 1) and the *Srinagar* inscription of queen Diddā (Col. VII). Vogel[33] states that the quadrangular form of *c*, regarded by Bühler as a characteristic peculiarity of the Śāradā, is not found in the inscriptions from Chamba. This is, however, far from the truth as even in one of the earliest Śāradā inscriptions from Chamba, the Brahmor copper plate grant, we find the quadrangular *c* occurring very frequently, *e.g.*, in lines 3 (*caṁpakā*),

30. *Supra*, p. 17.
31. *Ind. Pal.*, Plate III, Cols. III-IV, 10.
32. *Supra*, p. 12.
33. *Anitquities*, I, p. 52.

8 (*caṇḍī*), and 16 (*carma*). It does not, however, have a knob on the left as in the forms of the Hund and the Srinagar inscriptions.

7. The letter *ch* occurs only in the Brahmor and the Sungal copper plate inscriptions (Cols. VIII-IX). It does not materially differ from its ancient shape as found in the Kalsi edict V, *l*. 14.

8. The letter *j*, the most conservative letter in the Śāradā, differs from its earlier form as found in the Bower MS. by the development of a wedge or a serif at the right end of the top bar. It is mostly angular in shape though cursive forms also occur sometimes. The central bar issues sometimes from the upper end of the left hand vertical, *e.g.*, in the Hund inscription (Col. 1), and sometimes from the middle of the upper horizontal bar, *e.g.*, in the Hund inscription (Col. 1) and the Sungal copper plate grant (Col. IX).

9. *jh* occurs only once in the Sarahan Praśasti (Col. III) in combination with *j*.[34] Its form is similar to that of the Bower MS.[35]

10. The palatal nasal also occurs only in the Sarahan Praśasti (Col. III) in combination with *c* and *j*.[36] It shows a developed top bar with a wedge attached to it at the left end.

Cerebrals

11. The *akṣara ṭ* shows generally a flat top as in the Bower MS.[37] and a serif or a wedge attached to it at the right end. The archaic rounded form occurs occasionally as in the Dewai and Barikot inscriptions (Cols. IV-V).

12. *ṭh* preserves its ancient shape most faithfully and does not present anything remarkable.

13. Bühler[38] mentions *ḍ* as one of the Śāradā letters which exhibits a peculiar development. He describes it as showing a loop in the middle instead of an acute angle and a wedge at the lower end.

34. *l*. 11, *rasojjhitena*.
35. *Bower Manuscript*, plate 2, facing page XXVI.
36. *l*. 20, *ñce*; *ll*. 6, 7, 8, 20, *ñja*.
37. *Supra*, p. 13.
38. *Ind. Pal.*, p. 76.

However, it may be pointed out here that the loop which occurs frequently in the later Śāradā especially in the manuscripts, is conspicuously absent in our two early Śāradā records, *viz..*, the Brahmor and the Sungal copper plates (Cols. VIII, IX) in which alone, the letter occurs. Moreover, in place of the wedge at the lower end, we have a fork in the Brahmor copper plate and a small triangle in the Sungal grant.

14. The letter *ḍh* which is found only in the Hund inscription (Col. 1) agrees with the form of the Bower manuscript[39] with the difference that it has developed a knob in the left limb and the curve at the end, only turns sharply inside but does not form a loop with the base stroke.

15. The cerebral nasal as found in the Sarahan Praśasti (Col. III), the Srinagar stone inscription (Col. VII) and the Sungal grant (Col. IX) retains the form of the Gilgit manuscripts.[40] Its base stroke is suppressed and the two curves thus united are sometimes supported by a small upward stroke on the right. The Sarahan Praśasti occasionally shows a transitional form of the letter with a small base stroke.[41] In the Hund inscription (Col. 1) and the Brahmor copper plate (Col. VIII), the letter exhibits further development. It is provided with a down stroke, attached to its left end and slanting towards the right. This form of the letter with a tail occurs regularly in the later Śāradā. Vogel's[42] contention that the tailed *ṇ* occurs only after the 12th century cannot be upheld in the face of our two earlier examples.

Dentals

16. The *akṣara t* with its ancient left half missing and the right converted into a curve closely resembles the forms of Gilgit MSS.[43]

39. *Ind. Pal.*, pl. VI, Cols. 1-4.
40. *Supra*, p. 17-18.
41. *l.* 3, *kariṣṇu*, *viṣṇu*.
42. *Antiquities*, I, pp. 54.
43. *Supra*, p. 18.

and the Hatun inscription of Paṭoladeva.[44] Its form remains constant all through the Śāradā. In the Sarahan Praśasti (Col. III), the letter occasionally shows a loop in the middle as, *e.g.*, in *satata l.* 1:

17. According to Dr. Vogel[45] *th* occurs in the Śāradā inscriptions in two distinct forms. The older one which is very similar to that of the Gupta period has the shape of a crescent the convex side turned to the left. The later form which is lozenge-shaped occurs in inscriptions of the 12th century. However, it may be pointed out here that the lozenge shaped *th* caused by the employment of the top stroke occurs even earlier in the 10th century in the Srinagar inscription of queen Diddā (Col. VII).

18. The letter *d* does not present anything remarkable. It preserves its shape of the Gupta and the post-Gupta periods. In the Brahmor copper plate (Col. VIII), the letter is provided with a tail at the right end of the base stroke as in the forms of the Brahmor and Chittrahi inscriptions of Meruvarman.[46] In the Dewai inscription of Bhīmadeva (Col. IV), it has a circular loop in the middle and this form of the letter is the presursor of the looped *d* found in the Śāradā of the later periods.

19. The *akṣara dh* occurs in its ancient crescent form in the Sarahan Praśasti (Col. III) and the Brahmor and the Sungal copper plate inscriptions (Cols. VIII, IX). In the Srinagar inscription of queen Diddā (Col. VII) the letter has a quadrangular shape evidently caused by the flattening of the top and the bottom.

20. The dental nasal retains the form of the 6th and the 7th centuries. Its shape is similar to that of the Hatun inscription of Paṭoladeva and the Gilgit MSS.[47]

Labials

21. The *akṣara p* in the Hund inscription (Col. 1) the Sarahan Praśasti (Col. III), the Dewai and Barikot inscriptions (Cols. IV, V)

44. *Supra*, p. 18.
45. *Antiquities*, I, p. 54.
46. *Supra*, p. 22
47. *Supra*, p. 188

and in the Sungal grant (Col. IX), occurs in the same form as in the Gupta alphabet of the 4th and the 5th centuries. In the Srinagar stone inscription (Col. VII), the S.P.S. Museum bronze image inscription (Col. VI), the Brahmor copper plate grant (Col. VIII) and occasionally in the Sungal copper plate grant (Col. IX) it is marked by the downward elongation of the right hand vertical and in this respect agrees closely with the form of the 6th and the 7th centuries as found in the Hatun inscription and the Gilgit MSS.[48] The letter shows a unique form with a closed top in the ligature *pt* in the coins of king Kṣema Gupta of Kashmir (Col. II).

22. The letter *ph* occurs in a looped form in the Sarahan Praśasti (Col. III) and the Sungal grant (Col. IX). The loop which marks the aspirate is caused by the contact of the older open curve with the base stroke. The letter thus differs from the form of the Bower MS[49] where the loop is attached to the right of *p* instead of on the inside. The Brahmor grant (Col. VIII) the letter retains its older form with an open curve turned sharply inside. The letter in this form closely resembles the letter *ḍh.*

23. The letter *b* in the early Śāradā records is mostly represented by *v* and will be described subsequently.

24. *bh* occurs in two forms, "either with an inverted wedge or with an open triangle." The wedged form closely agreeing with that found in the Bower MS and the Gilgit MSS,[50] occurs in the Sarahan Praśasti (Col. III), the Srinagar stone inscription (Col. VII) and occasionally in the Hund inscription (Col. 1) and the Dewai stone inscription (Col. IV). The form with an open triangle is found in the Hund inscription (Col. 1), the Dewai and the Barikot inscriptions (Cols. IV, V) and the Sungal copper plate (Col. IX). The triangle, sometimes, becomes more open and less defined as, *e.g.*, in the Dewai inscription (Col. IV) and the letter looks like *h*. The uncommon forms of the letter are noticed in (1) the Brahmor copper plate (Col. VIII)

48. *Ibid.*
49. *Supra*, p. 13
50. *Ibid.*, pp. 13, 18.

and the coins of Tribhuvangupta and Bhīmagupta of Kashmir (Col. II) where the left limb is represented by a small upward stroke instead of the wedge or the open triangle.

25. The letter *m* generally retains its earlier shape as found in the Nirmand copper plate, the Hatun inscription of Paṭoladeva and the Gilgit MSS.[51] Sometimes, however, the right hand vertical protrudes downwards and there appears a knob or a small triangle on the left, *e.g.*, in the Hund inscription (Col. I), the S.P.S. Museum bronze image inscription (Col. VI), the Srinagar stone inscription (Col. VII) and the Sungal copper plate grant (Col. IX).

Semi Vowels

26. The letter *y* is exclusively bipartite. It differs from the earlier bipartite form of the Nirmand copper plate, the Hatun inscription and the Gilgit MSS[52] by a greater bulge on the left and by the occasional downward prolongation of the right hand vertical. It, however, closely agrees with the form of the Svaim inscription of Rājānaka Bhogaṭa.[53]

27. *r* shows generally a wedge at the lower end of the vertical on the left side. Sometimes the wedge is replaced by a small upward stroke and occasionally by a small triangle as for example in the Sungal grant (Col. IX) and the Dewai inscription (Col. IV). An unknown form with a big rounded loop on the left occurs once in the Brahmor plate (Col. VIII) in the word *Narasimhasya* (*l.* 12) but Dr. Vogel[54] takes the word to have been inserted in the plate at a much later date, as the forms of the letters of this word differ from those used in the inscription.

28. The letter *l* with the right hand vertical protruding the body of the letter and the left hand curve attached to it by means of a small horizontal stroke retains the form of the 6th and the 7th centuries. In the coins of Gopala Varman of Kashmir (Col. II), in the Dewai stone inscription (Col. IV) and sometimes in the Srinagar stone

51. *Supra*, p. 19.
52. *Ibid.*
53. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
54. *Antiquities*, I, p. 56.

inscription (Col. VI), the horizontal stroke connecting the left hand curve and the right hand vertical is converted into another curve and this form of the letter with two curves is regularly found in the Śāradā of the subsequent periods.

29. The letter *v* which also represents *b* preserves its older shape of the Hatun inscription and the Gilgit MSS.[55] In the coins of Avantivarman and Śaṁkaravarman of Kashmir (Col. II) and sometimes in the Hund inscription (Col. 1) it occurs in an angular form while in our other records the cursive form predominates.

Sibilants

30. *ś* is squarish in shape and has generally a wedge on the left. The wedge is sometimes replaced by a triangular loop as, for example, in the Sungal copper plate grant (Col IX) and the Dewai stone inscription (Col. IV) and sometimes by a triangle left open on one side as, for example, in the Brahmor copper plate (Col. VIII) and the coins of king Śaṁkaravarman of Kashmir (Col. II). An older form of the letter with rounded top occurs occasionally in the Sungal copper plate grant (Col. IX), as, for example, in *parameśvara l.* 1.

31. The letter *ṣ* preserves faithfully the form of the western Gupta character and does not call for any special remark.

32. *s* is similar to *ś* but open at the top. In the Sungal copper plate grant (Col. IX) it has an open triangular wedge on the left similar to that of *bh*.

Spirants

33. The letter *h* does not present anything remarkable except that in the Dewai inscription (Col. IV) the letter occurs in a much developed form with the lower curve turned round and drawn further towards the left.

34. The *visarga* and *anusvāra* do not present anything worthy of note.

55. *Supra*, p. 19

35. The *jihvāmulīya* and the *upadhmānīya* are frequently used in our inscriptions from Chamba. The former does not occur in any other of our early Śāradā records. The latter, however, also occurs in the Srinagar stone inscription (Col. VII). The shape of *jihvāmulīya* closely agrees with that of the letter *v*. The *upadhmānīya* is described by Vogel[56] as resembling the figure 8 laid sideways. The form of the Brahmor copper plate (Col. VIII) with the horizontal line below agrees with that of the Gilgit MSS noted above (p. 19).

The *virāma* occurs in the Hund inscription, the Sarahan Praśasti and the Brahmor and the Sungal copper plate inscriptions. In the Hund inscription (Col. 1) it is characterised by a long slanting stroke drawn over the head of the letter on the right. It has been attached to the letter *t* in (*samvat ll.* 6, 7) which retains its fuller form. In the other three records (Cols. III, VIII, IX) the stroke is very short and the letters to which it is attached appear in a very changed form. Thus *t* becomes a mere curve and *m* a mere dot or a small circle.

II. The Medial Vowels (See Table 2C)

1. Medial *ā* is expressed by means of a wedge or a serif attached to the top of the consonant on the right side. However, in case of certain consonants with a double top, as, for example, *p*, *y*, *ś*, and *s* either single or accompanied by a subscribed consonant, we find the vowel sign expressed in the Sarahan Praśasti (Col. III) and the Sungal copper plate grant (Col. IX) by means of a horizontal top stroke, with a wedge or a serif at its right end, attached to the left top end of the consonant. The vertical on the right is shortened above and remains free from the top bar. Occasionally in the Sungal copper plate grant, the vowel sign in *pā* (*ll.* 7, 10, 21, 24) and *sā* (*ll.* 25, 26) is expressed in the usual manner, *i.e.*, by a serif attached to the top of the right hand vertical. In case of the consonants like *ṅ*, *ṭ* and *ṅ*, the *ā* sign is expressed by a hook or a semicircle and in case of *j* by a small vertical attached to the right end of the central stroke and

56. *Antiquities*, I, p. 58.

forming a right angle with it. In the latter case, the letter drops the top bar and the wedge attached to it.

2. The signs for medial *i* and *ī* are generally the same as in the preceding centuries and consist of curves drawn down respectively to the left and the right of the consonant. A few cases are noticed in the Sarahan Praśasti (Col. III), the Hund inscription (Col. 1) and Brahmor and Sungal copper plate grants (Cols. VIII, IX) where the vowel signs have been marked by the sickle shaped curves in the ancient manner of the Kuṣāṇa inscriptions.

3. Medial *u* is expressed in two ways :

(i) by a triangular wedge, which sometimes assumes the shape of a short upward stroke or hook, attached to the foot of the vertical on the left side. In case of consonants, like *ṇ*, *ḍ*, *ph*, *y*, and *h* where the vertical is absent, the wedge is attached by means of a short vertical.

(ii) by a curve which represents the initial *u*.

In case of *ru*, the vowel sign is denoted by the usual curve below the vertical in the Sarahan Praśasti (Col. III); while in the Srinagar stone inscription (Col. VII) and the Brahmor and Sungal copper plate grants (Cols. VIII-IX) the sign is expressed attaching a downward steamer to the right of the letter.

4. Medial *u* is also expressed like the medial *u* in two ways :

(i) by a horizontal, sometimes wavy flaglike line, attached to the lower end of the vertical on the left side.

(ii) by the subscribed sign for initial *ū*.

Mention may be made of the groups *rū* and *brū* occurring in the Sarahan Praśasti (Col. III).[57] Here *rū* has been formed by "the maṭrikā with the subscribed initial vowel mark." The right hand steamer of the vowel, however, has been attached above the curve near the middle of the vertical of the superscribed *r*. In *brū* we find the vowel

57. *ll.* 6, 8, 13, 15.

sign expressed of two curves attached to the middle of the letter, one slanting downwards and the other rising upwards.

5. According to Bühler[58] the angular medial *ṛ* is a peculiar development of the Śāradā. But in our early Śāradā records the shape of the curve, representing the medial *ṛ* is mostly rounded. The angular form occurs very occasionally as, for example, in the Sarahan Praśasti[59] (Col. III) and the Brahmor copper plate grant[60] (Col. VIII).

6. Medial *e* is expressed either by a stroke—horizontal or slanting—placed over the consonant or by the *priṣṭhamatrā*. i.e., by a wedge, serief or a small downstroke attached to the left end of the top bar.

7. Medial *ai* is expressed by the combination of two *e* symbols, *i.e.*, by the superscribed stroke and the *priṣṭhamatrā*. In one case in the Brahmor copper plate grant[61] (Col. VIII), the vowel has been rendered by two *e* strokes placed above the letter.

8. Medial *o* is expressed in three distinct ways:

(i) by two wedges attached to the both ends of the top bar or in case of letters with open top, to two top ends,

(ii) by a superscribed slanting stroke accompanied by a wedge or a curve in case of *ṭ*, *ṇ*, attached to the right end of the top bar,

(iii) by a superscribed flourish.

The first method is more common in the Sarahan Praśasti. Attention may be drawn to a unique example *lo* occurring in this *inscription (l. 7)* where the left hand wedge has been attached to the *curve instead of to the top stroke.*

9. Medial *au* is expressed by the superscribed *o* flourish combined with the wedge or a serif attached to the right end of the top bar.[62]

58. *Ind. Pal.*, p. 57.

59. In *bṛ l.* 15.

60. In *kṛ l.* 2.

61. In *vai l.* 19.

62. In one case, viz., *sau l.* 7 in the Sarahan Praśasti the wedge has been wrongly placed at the left end of the stroke.

Occasionally it is marked in the Sarahan Praśasti[63] (Col. III) and the Srinagar stone inscription[64] (Col. VII) by two wedges attached to both ends of the top bar combined with the superscribed *e* stroke.

III. Ligatures (See Table 2D)

1. As regards the ligatures,the early Śāradā alphabet preserves faithfully the ancient method of writing the conjunct consonants one below the other.

2. *k* retains its ancient form without the loop when in combination with subscript vowels *u*, *ṛ* or when forming the upper and the middle element of the ligature. As the final element it retains its usual looped shape.

3. The subscript *ñ* occurs in a form absolutely distinct from the superscript *ñ*. Its shape closely resembles the figure 3 and it occurs only in combination with *j*. A peculiar form of the subscript *ñ* is noticed in the word *ṛājñī* in the Brahmor copper plate grant (*l*. 12).

4. The lingual *ṭ* as a second member of the ligature ocours in its normal form in the Sarahan Praśasti (Col. III). In our other records, save the Srinagar stone inscription, it assumes a distinctive shape and consists of a semicircular curve open to the right and a slanting stroke attached to the foot of the upper consonant on the right. In the Srinagar stone inscription (Col. VII) its form is identical with that of the subscribed *ṭh*.

5. The subscribed *ṭh* ocours in the Hund inscription, the Brahmor and the Sungal copper plate grants in combination with *ṣ*. Its shape resembles the subscribed *v* in the Sungal copper plate (Col. IX) but has in addition a tail attached to the foot of the upper consonant on the right. In the Hund inscription (Col. 1) it consists of the usual circular *ṭh* with a tail. In the Brahmor copper plate grant (Col VIII) its shape is identical with the subscribed *ṭ* described above.

63. In *kṣau l*. 11; *gau l*. 17; *tau*, *l*. 17.
64. In *gau l*. 3.

6. The dental *th* as the second or the final element of a ligature considerably differs in shape from the mātṛikā. In the Sarahan Praśasti (Col. III) it is expressed by a spiral or an inward curve drawn from left to right. In the Hund inscription (Col. 1) it consists of a curve which starting from left sharply turns round and ends in a tail on the right. In the Brahmor copper plate grant (Col. VIII) it is rendered by a long drawn curve open on the right and with a hook at its lower end. In the Sungal copper plate (Col. IX) it consists of a spiral similar in shape to that of the Sarahan Praśasti but sometimes the curve forming the spiral instead of turning inside turns sharply round and moves towards the left. The same form of the subscribed *th* (Col. V) is found in the Barikot inscription with the difference that the curve turns further back towards the left.

7. The subscribed *y* preserves the form of the Kuṣāṇa and the Gupta inscriptions. Its right limb is not so much elongated as is seen in some of our records of the 6th and the 7th centuries, *e.g.*, the Hatun inscription, and the Gilgit MSS.[65] A unique form of the subscribed *y* occurs in the Barikot inscription (Col.V) in the ligature *jy* (*l.* 1) where the right limb of *y* moving upwards forms a contact with the right end of the central bar of *j*.

8. Bühler[66] has drawn attention to one of the peculiar features of the Śāradā according to which *r* as the first part of the ligature is inserted into the left side of the second letter. In general the superscript *r* retains its full form with the vertical slightly shortened. In ligatures *rṇ, rth, rdh*, it does not preserve its distinctive shape and usually looses its bottom part. In the ligature *rv* (Cols. VIII-IX) it is marked only by a "small excrescence on the left curve of the *v* mātṛikā." In the group *ry*, it is expressed by a short vertical to which the curve of *y* is attached in one continuous stroke.

9. In ligatures where *r* forms the middle or the final element, it is rendered by an upward stroke attached to the lower end of the upper consonant on the left. In the Sarahan Praśasti (Col. III) it is

65. *Supra*, p. 21.
66. *Ind. Pal.*, p. 76.

sometimes confused with the medial *u* but in other records its upward elongation gives it a distinctive character.

10. The subscribed *v* in the ligature *sv* is generally triangular in shape. In the Brahmor copper plate grant, however, it retains its original rounded form.

B. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ALPHABET IN 11TH-13TH CENTURIES A.D.

We have discussed in detail the features of the Śāradā characters as they first appear in the epigraphic and the numismatic records of the 8th, 9th and the 10th centuries. We now proceed to discuss their development in the 11th, 12th and the 13th centuries on the basis of the following records :

(1) Coins of the following rulers of Kashmir and Gandhāra : Ananta (A.D. 1028-63), Kalaśa (A.D. 1063-89), Harṣa (A.D. 1089-1101), Uccala (A.D. 1101-11), Sussala (A.D. 1112-20), Jayasimha (A.D. 1128-55), and Mahmud of Ghazni.[67]

(2) The Dacchan (District Doda, Jammu) stone inscription of the reign of Śrī Nantadeva, *Sam.* 12=A.D. 1036 (?).[68]

(3) The Bhakund (Chamba) fountain inscription of the reign of Trailokyadeva, Śāstra (410) 4 (A.D. 1028-29).[69]

(4) The Kulait (Chamba) copper plate inscription of Somavarman (11th century).[70]

(5). The Chamba copper plate grant of Somavarman and Āsaṭa-varman (11th century).[71]

67. Cunningham, *CMI.* Pls. IV, V, VII; Rodgers, *JASB.* XLVIII, 18.
68. *Antiquities of Marev-Wadwan*, pp. 24-25 and Plate. The king Antadeva of the inscription is probably identical with the king Ananta of Kashmir (A.D. 1028-63) and *sam.* 12 probably refers to the Laukika and corresponds to A.D. 1036.
69. *Antiquities*, I, pp. 177 ff. and Plate XX.
70. *Ibid.*, pp. 182 ff. and Plate XXIV.
71. *Ibid.*, pp. 187 ff. and Plate XXV.

(6) The Thundu (Chamba) copper plate inscription of Āsaṭa-varman (11th century).[72]

(7) The Luj (Chamba) fountain inscription of the 1st year of Jāsaṭa, Śāstra (41) 81 (A.D. 1105-6).[73]

(8) The S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar stone slab inscription of the reign of Jayasimha (Laukika) *sam.* 25 (A.D. 1149).[74]

(9) The Tapar (Kashmir) stone inscription of Paramāṇḍa-deva *sam.* 33 (A.D. 1157).[75]

(10) The Devi-ri-Kothi (Chamba) fountain inscription of Rājānaka Nāgapāla of the 17th year of Lalitavarman (A.D. 1159-61).[76]

(11) The Narayan image inscription of Rājānaka Nāgapāla.[77]

(12) The Salhi (Chamba) fountain inscription of Rājānaka Ludrapala of the 27th year of Lalitavarman, Śāstra (42) 46 (A.D. 1170).[78]

(13) The Arigom (Kashmir) stone slab inscription, *sam.* 73 (A.D. 1197).[79]

(14) The Devi-ri-Kothi (Chamba) inscription of Rājānaka Raṇapāla.[80]

(15) The Mul-Kihar (Chamba) fountain inscription.[81]

(16) The Baijnath Praśastis, Saka 1126 (A.D. 1204).[82]

72. *Ibid.*, pp. 197 ff. and Plate XXVI.
73. *Ibid.*, pp. 202 ff. and Plate XXVIII.
74. Preserved in the Archaeological section.
75. Now S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar.
76. *Antiquities*, I, pp. 209 ff. and Plate XXX.
77. *Ibid.*, pp. 207 ff. and Plate XXIX. The Nāgapāla mentioned in this inscription is identical with Nāgapāla of No. 10, (fn. 76).
78. *Ibid.*, pp. 216 ff. and Plate XXXII.
79. *EI*, IX, pp. 300-02 and Plate.
80. *Antiquities*, I, pp. 208 ff. and Plate XXIX.
81. *Ibid.*, pp. 224 ff. and Plate XXXIII.
82. *EI*, I, pp. 97 ff. The forms of letters in the table below have been taken from Bühler's *Ind. Pal.*, Pl. V. Col. I.

(17) The Sai (Chamba) fountain inscription of the reign of Ajayapāla Śāstra I (A.D. 1225?).[83]

(18) The Bijbehara (Kashmir) stone inscription of the reign of Rājadeva (Saka) *sam.* 58 (A.D. 1236).[84]

Details of the Forms

I. Vowels (See Table 3A)

1. The vowels *a* and *ā* retain their earlier forms and do not exhibit any significant change. Only in very rare cases do we find *a* with a closed top as, for example, in some coins of Mahmud of Ghazni (Col. I) and in one case in the Thundu copper plate grant of Āsaṭavarman (Col. VI).[85] This form of the letter becomes common in the later Śāradā of Kashmir and in the *Devāśeṣa of Chamba.*

2. The initial *i* preserve its older shape consisting of two dots and a curve below. In the Bhakund inscription (Col. III) and the Thundu copper plate grant (Col. VI) the two dots are replaced by two small circles.

3. The initial *ī*, the solitary instance of which we noticed in the Sarahan Praśasti above (p. 27) shows a distinct development in the Baijnath Praśastis (Col. XVI) where the two dots which stood previously on the either side of the central vertical now appear above the top of the letter. The same form of *i* is regularly met with in the later Śāradā and the Devaśeṣa.

4. *u* and *ū* preserve their earlier forms, except that in the Bhakund inscription (Col. III) *u* shows a loop in the middle.

5. No instance of initial *ṛ* occurs in our records.

6. The initial *e* displays no significant change.

7. The initial *ai* does not occur in the records of the period under reference.

83. *Antiquities*, I, pp. 232 ff. and Plate XXXV.
84. Marshall, *Note on Archaeological Work in Kashmir*, p. 21.
85. In *ato l.* 21.

8. The initial *o* which occurs mostly in the syllable *om* is formed like *u* with the addition of a wedge at the left top end. In the Bhakund inscription (Col. III), the wedge is replaced by a small triangle. An uncommon form of *o* occurs in the Baijnath Praśastis (Col. XVI), where instead of a wedge, we find a curve attached to the back of *u* and similar to that of *u*.

II. Consonants (See Table 3B)

Gutterals

1. *k* generally preserves its earlier form with a loop to the left. In certain cases, however, it develops a second loop to the right evidently caused by the contact of right hand curve with the central vertical. This double looped form of the letter is regularly found in the later Śāradā and Devāśeṣa. Examples of the latter form may be seen in Cols. I, II, VIII, XIII and XV.

2. *kh* occurs regularly with a flat top and a vertical to the left. The archaic form with rounded top found in the Sungal copper plate grant above, become rare.

3. The wedge or serif at the left lower end of *g* is replaced sometimes by a small triangle. A unique form of the letter is noticed in the Dacchan inscription (Col. II) in the word *gūptena l.* 3.

4. In *gh* the development is marked by the elongation of the right hand stroke which henceforth becomes the regular feature of the letter.

5. *ṅ* which occurs only in ligatures, generally preserves its earlier shape. An uncommon form occurs in the Arigom inscription (Col. XIII) where the wedge at the right end is replaced by a small vertical which protrudes down and touches the lower slanting stroke.

Palatals

6. *c* occurs mostly in quadrangular form. The ancient rounded form occurs only in one case in the Chamba grant of Somavarman and Āsaṭa. In the S.P.S. Museum inscription of Jayasimha (Col. VIII) the letter shows a triangular loop to the left, and in the Bijbehara

inscription (Col. XVIII) it occurs with open top. In the Dacchan inscription (Col. II) the letter is highly cursive in shape and shows a big circular loop on the left.

7. The conservative letters *ch* and *j* occur in their ancient forms and hardly present anything remarkable.

8. No instance of *jh* is found in the records of the period under review.

9. The palatal nasal which occurs only in combination with other letters preserves the earlier form with the difference that it often shows a wedge or a serif at the lower end of the central vertical to the left. In the Mul-Kihar inscription (Col. XV) the wedge is replaced by a slanting stroke attached to the foot of the vertical to the right.

Cerebrals

10. *ṭ* occurs regularly with a flat top and generally with a wedge or a serif at the right top end. The archaic rounded form found in the Dewai and Barikot inscriptions above, now becomes rare.

11. *ṭh* is as usual represented by a circle.

12. *ḍ* shows regularly a wedge or a serif at the lower end.

13. *ḍh* does not display any significant development.

14. Of the three forms of cerebral *ṇ* noticed in the earlier Śāradā records above, one with the connecting base stroke becomes rare and is found only in one case in the Bhakund inscription (Col.III) in the word *varuṇa*, *l*. 1. The other two forms continue to be used with equal regularity.

Dentals

15. *t* a conservative character in Śāradā remains unchanged. A peculiar form occurs in the Bhakund inscription (Col. III) and the Sai inscription (Col. XVII) where the latter is provided with a loop.

16. *th* shows a flat top and is lozenge or rectangular in shape. Ancient crescent form becomes rare.

17. *d* does not exhibit any material change except that it shows a loop in the left limb in the Bhakund inscription (Col. III) and a unique form resembling the rounded *c* in the Dacchan inscription (Col. II).

18. *dh* shows regularly a flat top and is usually angular in shape. The cursive forms occur only in the Kulait and Chamba copper plate grants (Cols. IV, V) and occasionally in the Devi-ri-Kothi inscription (Col. X). The crescent shaped *dh* occurs once in the Mul-Kihar fountain inscription (Col. XV) in the word *toyādhāram*, *l*. 21.

19. The dental nasal agrees closely with the modern *n* of the Devanāgarī. An uncommon looped form occurs in the Bhakund inscription (Col. III).

Labials

20. The labials *p* and *ph* retain their earlier characteristics and exhibit no significant change.

21. *b* is usually represented by *v* and will be described subsequently.

22. *bh* generally shows a wedge in the middle. In some cases, the wedge is replaced by a triangular loop as for example, in the S.P.S. Museum inscription of Jayasimha (Col. VIII) and in the Narayan Image inscription of Rājānaka Nāgapāla (Col. XI). The letter occurs with a less pronounced wedge or an open triangle in the Bhakund inscription (Col. III), the Luj inscription (Col. VII) and occasionally in the Mul-Kihar inscription (Col. XV).

23. *m* does not present anything remarkable.

Semi Vowels

24. *y* occurs in a developed form with a closed top in the S.P.S. Museum inscription of Jayasimha (Col. VIII) and in the Arigom stone slab inscription (Col. XIII). This form of the letter is frequently met with in the later Śāradā records of Kashmir. In our all other records, the letter retains its earlier shape with open top.

25. *r* generally shows a wedge at the lower end of the vertical to the left. The wedge is occasionally replaced by a small triangle, for example, in the Bhakund inscription (Col. III), the S.P.S. Museum inscription of Jayasimha (Col. VIII) and in the Narayan Image inscription of Nāgapāla (Col. XI). In the copper plate inscriptions, (Cols. IV, V, VI), we find in place of the wedge, a small upward stroke attached to the vertical on the left. In the Dacchan inscription (Col. II) the letter occurs in two cases (*l.* 2) with a big triangular loop on the left.

26. *l* displays no change.

27. *v* which also represents *b* now becomes more angular in shape. An uncommon triangular form is found in the Dacchan inscription in the word *deva, line* 2.

Sibliants

28. *ś* displays no change. It occurs in the same forms as in the earlier records noted above.

29. In *ṣ* the vertical on the right sometimes *protrudes downwards, e.g.*, in the Bhakund inscription (Col. III), Kulait grant (Col. IV), and the Thundu grant (Col. VI).

30. *s* occurs more frequently with a wedge and occasionally with a triangular loop at the left lower end. In the copper plate inscriptions (Cols. IV, V, VI) the wedge is left open on one side as in the Brahmor and Sungal copper plate grants, noted above.

Spirants

31. *h* shows no material change except that the curve below often moves further towards the left.

32. *jihvāmūlīya* generally retains its earlier form. In the Baijnath Praśasti (Col. XVI), it is, however, more angular in shape.

33. *upadhmānīya* occurs in a changed form and may be described as cerebral *ṇ* with a horizontal line below. Its shape resembles that of the Gilgit manuscripts noted above (p. 19).

Virāma (See Table 3D)

Virāma is expressed by a slanting stroke running through the right top end of the vowelless consonant. In the Bijbehara inscription (Col. XVIII), we, however, find the stroke running through the middle of the *akṣara*. The consonants with which the *virāma* is attached appear in modified forms in the copper plate inscriptions (Cols. IV, V, VI) and occasionally in the Bhakund inscription (Col. III). In all other records, they retain their fuller and complete forms.

III. The Medial Vowels (See Table 3C)

The methods for expressing the medial *ā* continue to be practically the same as in the preceding centuries. The following peculiarity, however, deserves notice.

1. The hook or semi-circle peculiar to *ṅa*, *ṭa* and *ṇa* has also been attached to *jñā* in the Devi-ri-Kothi inscription (Col. X), to *ḍā* and *yā* in the Salhi fountain inscription (Col. XII) and to *jā* in the Baijnath Praśastis (Col. XVI).

2. The medial *i* and *ī* are rendered more frequently by the long curves drawn respectively to the left and the right of the consonants. The small curves placed over the consonants occur only occasionally in the copper plate inscriptions (Cols. IV, V, VI) and in the Sai fountain inscription (Col. XVII). The sickle shaped *ī* occurs only in one case in *nī* (*l.* 1) in the Thundu copper plate grant (Col. VI).

3. The signs for expressing the medial *u* are the same as in the earlier records, except that in a few cases we find the vowel sign expressed by a stroke similar to that of medial *ū*, *e.g.*, in *pu* in Col. VI.

4. Medial *ū* is expressed in the older fashion, *viz*., by a wavy or slanting line attached to the foot of the vertical on the left side or by a subscribed initial *ū*.

5. The angular form of medial *ṛ* found anly occasionally in the earlier inscriptions, now occurs more frequently.

6. In the treatment of the medial vowels *e* and *ai*, the only point worth noting is that they are now formed more often by the

superscribed strokes placed over the top of the consonant and less frequently by the *priṣṭhamātrā*.

7. Medial *o* is expressed more often by superscribed flourish and less frequently by a wedge at the left top end combined with a superscribed *e* stroke. The ancient method of two wedges attached to both sides of the top of the letter and used frequently in the Sarahan Praśasti above, becomes rare. It has been used only in two cases in the Arigom stone inscription (Col. XIII) in *lo*, *l.* 2 and *to*, *l.* 4, where, however, the wedges have been replaced by two small verticals.

8. Medial *au* is rendered throughout by the combination of superscribed flourish and the *ā* mark. The method of expressing the vowel by two wedges attached to both ends of the top bar combined with the superscribed *e* stroke, and used in the Sarahan Praśasti above, becomes obsolete.

IV. Ligatures (See Table 3D)

1. *r* as the first member of ligature looses its wedge and assumes the form of a small vertical suspended from the top bar.

2. The subscribed *r* in the Arigom inscription (Col. XIII) is rendered by a long slanting stroke drawn from left to right and attached to lower end of the upper consonant. This form of the subscribed *r* becomes more common in the Śāradā of the later periods.

3. The 'S' like form of the subscribed *th* which occurred occasionally in the earlier records now becomes more common. The spiral form is noticed only in the copper plate inscriptions (Cols. IV, V, VI).

4. The ligatures *ṣṭ* and *ṣṭh* generally appear in identical forms (cf. Cols. V, XIII). The tails are longer in the Salhi inscription (Col. XII), the Mulkihar inscription (Col. XV) than in the copper plate inscriptions (Cols. IV, V, VI). The looped forms of subscribed *ṭ* and *ṭh* found regularly in the Śāradā of the following periods occur only in the Arigom inscription (Col. XIII).

5. The subscribed *ñ* which usually occurs in combination with *j* has, as in the earlier records, the shape of numeral 3 and is attached

to the upper consonant in varied positions, sometimes lying, sometimes straight and sometimes half straight half lying. A peculiar form occurs in the Devi-ri-Kothi inscription (Col. X) and the Salhi fountain inscription (Col. XII) where the letter looses its upper portion.

The following peculiar forms of ligatures deserve notice :

nthy in Col. VI, *ṭṭ* and *jy* in Col. XIV, *ṣṭha* in Col. VI, *rv* and *gry* in Col. XV, *kkre* in Col. XIII, *rth* in Cols. X, XII, XV.

C. THE FINAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE ALPHABET

The development of the Śāradā alphabet upto the 13th century A.D. has been discussed above.[86] In the following period, the alphabet displays conspicuous development in the records of Chamba and the adjoining hill tracts and forms of a few letters appear in such an altered form that it has been given a separate name, viz. *Devāśeṣa*.[87] The detailed treatment of the Devāśeṣa would be out of place here and being presently concerned only with the Śāradā proper we shall discuss below the development of this alphabet in the 14th and the subsequent centuries on the basis of the following inscription of Kashmir and Gandhāra.

(1) The Kotihar (Kashmir) stone slab inscription of the reign of Shihab-ud-Din, dated (Laukika) *sam*. 45 (A.D. 1369).[88]

(2) The Khonamuh (Kashmir) stone inscription of the reign of Zain-ul-Abidin, dated Kali 4530 (A.D. 1428).[89]

(3) The Peshawar Museum inscription of Vānhaḍaka, dated Laukika *sam* 538 (A.D. 1461).[90]

(4) The Hariparbat (Srinagar, Kashmir) inscription of the reign of Muhammad Shah, dated *sam*. 60 (A.D. 1484).[91]

86. See Col. III, IX, XI.
87. Cf. Vogel, *Antiquities*, I, p. 17; B. Ch. Chahbra, *Antiquities*, II, p. 2.
88. The inscription is now preserved in the S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar.
89. Marshall, Note on *Archaeological Work in Kashmir*, pp. 18-20, Deambi, B.K., *Vishveshveranand Indological Journal*, Vol. XVII, pp. 220-24.
90. *EI*., *X*, pp. 79-81 and Plate.
91. Marshall, *Note*, p. 18 : According to Keilhorn (*Ind. Ant*., XX, p. 153) *Samvat* 60 refers to the Saka era.

(5) The Ushkur (Baramulla, Kashmir) relief inscription of certain Yasakadeva dated *sam.* 82 (A.D. 1506?).[92]

(6) The S.P.S. Museum, storage vessel inscription of Avntivarman dated (Vikram?) 1583 (A.D. 1526?).[93]

(7) The Wular-hama (Bijbehara, Kashmir) bath-room gate inscription.

(8) The Zaji-Nai (District Kishtwar, Jammu) stone inscription.[94]

I. The Initial Vowels (See Table 4A)

1. The initial *a* is generally closed at the top except in the Kotihar (Col. I) and the Peshawar Museum inscriptions (Col. III) where the letter occurs in its earlier form with an open top. The peculiar forms of *a* are noticed in the Kotihar (Col. I) and the Khonamuh (Col. II) inscriptions where the left hand lower curve has been attached direct to the top bar. Again in the S.P.S. Museum storage-vessel inscription (Col. XII) the letter shows a small circle in place of the usual wedge at the lower end of the vertical.

2. The initial *a* occurs regularly with a closed top. The Kotihar (Col. I) and Zaji Nai (Col. III) inscriptions present a peculiar form with the length of the vowel expressed by an upward stroke instead of the usual curve.

3. The initial *i* occurs only in the Khonamuh inscription (Col. II) and displays significant development. The earlier two dots above the curve are converted into a small curve facing downwards and attached to a small upward stroke at the right end.

4. The initial *ī* is found only in the Peshawar Museum inscription (Col. III) and has exactly the same shape as in the Baijnath Praśastis noted above.

92. The inscription is now preserved in the University Museum, Philadelphia, U.S.A. It is written in very crude form of Śāradā and it has not been possible to evaluate all the characters.

93. Marshall, Note, p. 22. It is, however, doubtful if the inscription belongs to so late a period (See Sec. II below).

94. *Antiquities of Marey-Wadwan*, pp. 25-26.

5. The initial *u* remains unchanged.

6. No instances of initial *u* and *ṛ* are provided by our inscriptions.

7. The initial *e* occurs only in the Hariparbat inscription (Col. V) and preserves its ancient triangular form.

8. The initial *ai* does not occur in our inscriptions.

9. The initial *o* occurs in the syllablle *om* in the Kotihar inscription (Col. I) and shows a marked development with earlier wedge at the left top end now converted into a vertical stroke.

10. No example of initial *au* found in our records.

II. Consonants (See Table 4B)

Gutterals

1. The *akṣara k* occurs regularly in the double looped form in all our records except the Peshawar Museum inscription (Col. III) where it still preserves its earlier form with a single loop.

2. The letter *kh* preserves its earlier shape and does not present anything remarkable.

3. *g* also occurs in its earlier forms and shows either a wedge or a small triangle at the lower end of the left vertical.

4. The letter *gh* has an archaic shape in the Kotihar (Col. I) and the S.P.S. Museum storage vessel (Col. VI) inscriptions. A peculiar form occurs in the Ushkur relief inscription where the upper ends of the central and the right hand strokes have been joined to form a loop and the central vertical stroke has been prolonged downwards beyond the central vertical. In our other inscriptions it occurs in its earlier form characterised by the downward elongation of the right hand vertical.

5. The gutteral nasal does not present anything remarkable. It shows as usual, a serif, wedge or a small triangle at the right top end.

Palatals

6. *c* occurs only in the quadrangular form and shows a circular loop in the left limb in the Wular-hama (Col. VII) and Ushkur (Col. V) inscriptions.

7. *ch* retains its conservative character and shows no significant change.

8. *j* occurs generally in its earlier form. A peculiar form is found in the Peshawar Museum inscription (Col. III) where the central stroke issuing from the top horizontal stroke protrudes far down beyond the level of the bottom of the letter.

9. *jh* a rare character, does not occur in our inscriptions.

10. A developed form of *ñ* is found in the Khonamuh inscription (Col. II) where the earlier wedge at the left top end has developed into a vertical stroke as in the case of *o* noted above.

Cerebrals

11. *ṭ* occurs in an ancient cursive form in the S.P.S. Museum storage vessel inscription (Col. IV) and shows a knob in place of the usual wedge or a serif at the right top end.

12. *ṭh* displays no change.

13. *ḍ* shows highly angular forms in the Kotihar (Col. I) and the Khonamuh (Col. II) inscriptions. Its form remains constant in our all other records.

14. *ḍh* occurs only in the Khonamuh inscription (Col. II) and shows a loop in place of the more common kink at the right end of the base horizontal.

15. Of the two forms of *ṇ* noticed in the earlier records above, only one is more commonly found in our inscriptions, viz. that without the left hand tail. In the Kotihar (Col. I) and Khonamuh (Col. II) inscriptions, this form shows further development and instead of the usual curves we have the three down strokes suspended from the top horizontal bar.

Dentals

16. *t* does not present anything remarkable except that in the Wular-hama inscription (Col. VII) it sometimes shows a loop in the middle and in the Kotihar inscription (Col. I) the upper vertical is occasionally missing and the curve is attached direct to the top.

17. *th* occurs only in a quadrangular form. Its shape is similar to that of *ṣ* with the difference that it has its top closed by means of a top stroke while the latter has its top open.

18. *d* develops a knob or a loop on the left in the Peshawar Museum (Col. III), the Wular-hama (Col. VII) and the Ushkur (Col. VII) inscriptions. Its form remains unchanged in our other records. A peculiar form of *d* is noticed once in the Peshawar Museum inscription (Col. III), in *mandara l.* 1, where the base stroke is highly slanting and the usual upward vertical stroke at its right end is greatly lengthened downwards.

19. *dh* shows regularly a well developed top bar.

20. *n* does not present anything remarkable.

Labials

21. *p* retains its earlier form and shows no change.

22. *ph* occurs only in the Ushkur (Col. V) and the Zajinai (Col. VIII) inscriptions. In the former, the loop marking the aspirate is attached to the right of *p* instead of on the inside as in the Bower manuscript above and in the latter, the curve instead of turning inside, turns sharply round and the letter resembles *h*.

23. *b* is usually represented by *v*. A distinction in their forms is, however, noticeable in the Hariparbat (Col. IV) inscription where *b* is rounded in shape as compared to *v* which is angular.

24. The form of *bh* remains constant except that is shows a loop in the middle in the Wular-hama inscription (Col. VII) in place of the usual wedge.

25. The form of *m* remains essentially the same but for a few peculiarities that it displays in some of our records. The peculiarities mainly consist in the treatment of the left limb. Thus it shows at the left lower end, a circular loop in Hariparbat (Col. IV) and Wular-hama (Col. VII) inscriptions, a small circle in the Ushkur inscription (Col. V) and a knob in the Khonamuh (Col. II) and Peshawar Museum (Col. III) inscriptions. The letter shows an archaic Gupta form in the S.P.S. Museum storage vessel inscription (Col. VI).

Semi-vowels

26. *y* occurs with a closed top except in the Peshawar Museum inscription (Col. III) where it retains its earlier form with an open top. In the Khonamuh inscription (Col. II)) it shows an inward stroke issuing from the left top end, similar to one found in the early Śāradā manuscripts. An uncommon cursive form occurs in the Kotihar inscription (Col. I).

27. *r* and *l* do not display any significant change.

28. *v* which also represents *b* occurs in both angular and cursive forms. A peculiar cursive form is noticed in the Ushkur inscription (Col. V).

Sibilants

29. The form of *ś* does not differ materially from the earlier forms. It shows as usual a wedge or a small triangle in the left limb. In the Kotihar inscription (Col. I) the wedge is sometimes less defined.

30. *ṣ* does not display any significant development.

31. *s* displays the same characteristics as *ś* but is open at the top.

Spirants

32. A somewhat developed form of *h* occurs in the Peshawar Museum inscription (Col. III) which closely agrees with the modern *h* of the Devanāgarī. In our other records its form remains constant.

33. *jihvāmūlīya* does not occur in the records under reference.

34. *upadhmānīya* occurs in the Kotihar and Khonamuh inscriptions (Cols. I and II) and its shape is similar to that of angular *ṇ* described above with a horizontal bar below.

III. Medial Vowels (See Table 4C)

1. The methods of expressing the medial *ā* continue to be the same as in the earlier records. The peculiarities may be noticed in (i) *rā* (Col. III) where medial *ā* has been rendered by a long drawn vertical as in the modern Devanāgarī, (ii) in *hā* (Col. VI) where it has

been expressed by a knob, (iii) in *jā* (Cols. I, V, VII) where the small vertical denoting medial *ā* has been prolonged downwards to touch the central horizontal stroke.

2. Medial *i* and *ī* are rendered as usual by the curves drawn respectively to the left and right of the consonant. In the Wular-hama inscription (Col. VII) the curves are sometimes replaced by the verticals attached to the consonants by means of hook or a rectangle. The ornamental forms of medial *i* in *ni* (Cols. VII, VIII) and of *ī* in *hī* (Col. I) deserve notice.

3. Medial *u* is expressed in the older fashion, viz. by a wedge, a small triangle or by a curve at the lower end of the consonant. The peculiar forms of *pu* in the Hariparbat and Wular-hama inscriptions (Cols. IV and VII) are noteworthy.

4. Medial *ū* is rendered as usual by the subscript initial *u* or by a horizontal or slanting strokes attached to the bottom of the consonant on the left side.

5. Medial *ṛ* occurs in both angular and cursive forms. A peculiar form occurs in *ghṛ* (*l.* 2) in the Peshawar Museum inscription (Col. III) where the sign resembles the subscript *p*.

6. Except in the Peshawar Museum inscription (Col. III) medial *e* is rendered throughout by a horizontal stroke placed above the consonant. The *Pṛṣṭhamātrā* has been used in only one case in *ke* (*l.* 3) in the Peshawar Museum inscription. In this inscription the stroke of medial *e* continues to be a slanting one as in the earlier records.

7. Medial *ai* is rendered throughout by two horizontal *e* stroke placed above the consonant.

8. Medial *o* is likewise rendered only by the superscribed flourish. The other methods noticed in the earlier records become obsolete.

9. Medial *au* is expressed as usual by a superscribed flourish combined with a sign for medial *ā*.

Virāma (See Table 4B)

Virāma is expressed by the usual slanting stroke in the Peshawar Museum and Ushkur relief inscriptions (Cols. III, V). In the

Khonamuh inscription (Col. II), however, it consists of a long vertical attached to the consonant on the right side. The final *m* with a *virāma* attached to it appears in a modified form in the Peshawar Museum inscription (Col. III) while final *t* in the Khonamuh and Ushkur relief inscriptions (Cols. II, V) retains its complete form.

IV. Ligatures (See Table 4D)

1. The superscript *r* retains its original form in the ligatures *rm* in the S.P.S. Museum storage vessel inscription (Col. VI) and the Wular-Hama inscription (Col. VII) and in *rṣ* in the Khonamuh inscription (Col. II). In other ligatures loses its bottom part.

2. The subscript *ṭh* in the ligature *ṣṭh* is invariably rendered by a loop with a tail attached to it on the right side. A peculiar form of subscript *ṭh* occurs in the ligature *ṇṭh* in the Wular-Hama inscription (Col. VI) where the tail has been attached to the loop on the left side instead of on the right.

3. The subscript *ñ* occurs in a developed looped form in the ligatures *jñā* and *jñ* in the Khonamuh inscription (Col. II).

4. The following peculiar forms of ligatures deserve notice :

(i) *rth* (Col. II) which consists of a *t* with a steamer attached to it on the right side.

(ii) *br* (Col. V) where subscript *r* has the same shape as the subscript *ṭh* in the ligature *ṇṭh* in the Wular-Hama inscription (Col. VI) just noted above.

(iii) *hm* (Col. IV) where the superscript *h* ends in a long slanting stroke to the right.

(iv) *kṣ* (Col. VII) where both the elements occur in greatly modified forms.

Thus we find that the inscriptions of 14th, 15th and 16th centuries represent the last stage in the development of the epigraphic Śāradā alphabet. We notice final development in the forms of letters like *i*, *o*, *ñ*, *ṇ* and in the treatment of the medial vowels *e* and *o* which are now throughout formed by the superscribed strokes instead of by

the *pṛṣṭhamātras*. We also find that the forms of *a*, *ā* and *y* which fully developed top bars, of which only a few instances were noticed in the earlier records, now become fairly regular and common.

CONCLUSIONS

This brings our study of the development of the Śāradā alphabet to a close so far as its use in the inscriptions is concerned. No doubt, the use of this alphabet in the inscriptions continued even up to as late as the 18th century as is attested to by the discovery of a Śāradā inscription dated Vikram 1846 (1789 A.D.) by Pt. Anand Kaul.[95]

But since we do not possess the facsimilie of the inscription nor is the original traceable now, we are not in a position to say what further developments the alphabet displayed in the inscriptions after the 16th century A.D. This much is, however, clear that even in the inscriptions of the 15th and the 16th centuries noted above, the development of the Śāradā script is almost complete with the exception of the letters *i*, *e*, *ai*, and *jā*, the final changes in which are noticed as will be seen later on in the Śāradā manuscripts of this period.

Now before we close our present account it would be worthwhile to recount the opinions of some earlier eminent epigraphists, about the conservative nature of the Śāradā alphabet and see how far they hold good in the light of our present knowledge of the script.

The earlier epigraphists like Kielhorn and Hoernle described Śāradā as the most conservative alphabet which remained constant all through and showed but little change during the course of several centuries. Thus Kielhorn while editing the copper-plate inscription of Somavarman and Āsaṭa observed "that it would have been impossible to determine the age of that inscription even approximately from the characters in which it is written."[96] Dr. Hoernle similarly opined that "the Śāradā characters are no guide as to age" and that "any

95. *JASB*, Vol. VII, pp. 87-89.
96. *Ind. Ant.*, Vol. XVII, p. 7, n. 2.

undated manuscript or inscription written in the Śāradā alphabet must be placed any time after 500 A.D."[97]

However, the observations of the learned epigraphists seem to be evidently based on the insufficient evidence of the limited number of Śāradā records accessible to them. Our above study of the development of the Śāradā alphabet based on a very wide range of inscriptions dating from the 8th to 16th century A.D. would make it sufficiently clear that the Śāradā alphabet undergoes sure and distinct changes right from its first appearance in the 8th century A.D. till its final development in 15th and 16th centuries and there is no justification to label it as a **conservative alphabet**.

Secondly, Dr. Hoernle's suggestion that, 'the Śāradā characters are no guide to age' does not seem to be wholly true for keeping in view the forms that Śāradā characters display in the course of different centuries, it should not be impossible to determine the approximate date of any undated Śāradā record.

97. *Ibid.*, XII, p. 89.

CHAPTER III

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET PERIOD OF ITS USE

THE UPPER LIMIT

Till recently it was not possible to arrive at some definite conclusion with regard to the upper limit of the use of the Śāradā alphabet. The paucity of material obliged the learned epigraphists like Bühler and Hoernle to make tentative suggestions which in the light of the latest discoveries are not wholly tenable. Thus, Hoernle's suggestion[1] that the "elaboration of the so called Śāradā alphabet may be placed about 500 A.D.", is far from fact since the script used at this time in North Western India was, as seen above,[2] the so-called Gupta script and Śāradā had not yet appeared on the scene. Again Bühler's[3] observation that the Śāradā script appears from about 800 A.D. is based on the erroneous reading of the dates of the two Baijnath Praśastis, as Saka 726 or 804 A.D. As pointed out by Kielhorn[4] and Vogel[5] the correct reading of the date is Saka 1126 or *1204 A.D.* and as such, the Baijnath Praśastis cannot be regarded as the earliest known Śāradā inscriptions as suggested by Bühler.[6]

The earliest known dated inscription in Śāradā characters is the *stone inscription from Hund (District Attock, West Pakistan) dated sam.* 168-169 presumably of the Harṣa era and corresponding to 774-775 A.D.[7] On the basis of this inscription, the upper limit of the use

1. *JASB*, Vol. LX, p. 90.
2. P. 8ff. Also Cf. Coins of Pravarasena II and Toramāṇa of Kashmir, *cf. CMI.* Pl. III, which show pure Gupta characters.
3. *Ind. Pal.*, p. 76.
4. *Ind. Ant.*, XX, p. 154.
5. *Antiquities,* I, pp. 43-44.
6. *Ind. Pal.*, p. 76
7. *EI*, XXII, pp. 97 ff.

of the Śāradā alphabet may be fixed at *c.* 750 A.D. Unfortunately, we have no contemporary record from Kashmir or Chamba which were the main centres of the Śāradā alphabet. This much is, however, certain that the Śāradā script had not appeared in Kashmir in the first half of the 8th century A.D. as is attested to by the evidence of the coins of the Lalitāditya Pratāpāditya[8] which bear the legends (Śrī Pratāpa) in what may be called the post-Gupta characters not developed enough to be classed as Śāradā. The earliest specimens of the Śāradā alphabet from the Valley are, as pointed out by Bühler,[9] the coins of the rulers of the Utpala dynasty (855/6-939 A.D.).[10] In Chamba too, its use cannot be dated before the middle of the 8th century A.D. The Brahmor (Baramaor of the maps) and Chattrahi (Chittrahi of the maps) inscriptions of Meru-Varman, who is generally assigned to the end of the 7th or the beginning of the 8th century, cannot be claimed to be written in the Śāradā script and the Svaim inscription of Rājānaka Bhogaṭa,[11] the characters of which represent the transition between the post-Gupta and the Śāradā, scripts has evidently to be assigned a later date. The earliest Śāradā document from this hill State is the Sarahan Praśasti[12] which, as suggested by Vogel,[13] may, on palaeographic grounds assigned to the 9th century A.D.

THE LOWER LIMIT

Nothing definite can be said about the lower limit of the use of the Śāradā script in Gandhāra. Its use in the 15th century is, however, attested to by the evidence of the Peshawar Museum inscription of Vanhaḍaka dated Laukika *samvat* 538 (1461 A.D.)[14] which is written in the Śāradā characters. Its use in Kashmir continues even to this day, though it is confined only to the older generation of the priestly

8. *JNSI*, X, pp. 30-32.
9. *Ind. Pal.*, p. 76.
10. *CMI*, pls. 4, 5; *JASB*, XLVIII, p. 18.
11. *Antiquities*, I, No. 12, pp. 150-52.
12. *Ibid.*, No. 13, pp. 152 ff.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 47.
14. *EI*, X, pp. 79 ff.

class. Its use in inscriptions even as late as the 18th century is testified by the Digom (Kapal-Mochan, district Shopian) inscription of (Vikrama) 1846 (1789 A.D.).[15] In Chamba and Kangra, it remained a popular script till the 13th century A.D. when it was replaced by its descendent, the Devāśeṣa.[16]

15. *JASB*, VII, pp. 87-89.
16. *cf.* Vogel, *Antiquities*, I, p. 43.

CHAPTER IV

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET THE AREA OF ITS USE

Bühler[1] observes that the Śāradā alphabet appears from about 800 A.D. in Kashmir and in the north-eastern Punjab (Kangra and Chamba). Since the publication of Bühler's *'Indian Palaeography'*, number of Śāradā inscriptions have come to light and we are now in a position to say that Śāradā as an epigraphic alphabet was extensively used not only in Kashmir, Kangra and Chamba but also in Gandhāra (N.W. Pakistan), Ladakh, Jammu and even Haryana. The important inscriptions of each region are briefly noted below.

GANDHĀRA (North Western Pakistan)

A good number of Śāradā inscriptions have been discovered in Gandhāra but most of these are either fragmentary or defaced and now lying in the Lahore and Peshawar Museums. The earliest known inscription is the stone inscription from Hund in the Attock district, dated (Harṣa) *samvat* 168-169 corresponding to 774, 775 A.D.[2] The other important inscriptions are those of the Shahi kings, Bhīm-deva and Jayapāla discovered at Dewai in the Gadun territory[3] and Barikot in upper Swat.[4] The last known inscription from this region is the stone inscription of certain Vanhaḍaka, now preserved in the Peshawar Museum and dated Laukika 538 or 1461 A.D.[5]

1. *Ind. Pal.*, p. 76.
2. *EI*, XXII, p. 97 ff.
3. *EI*, XXI, pp. 298-300.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 301-02.
5. *EI*, X, pp. 79-81.

KASHMIR

Considering the fact that the Śāradā alphabet has been in use in Kashmir from the 9th century A.D. to this day, the number of Śāradā epigraphic records discovered so far in the Valley is by no means large and surprisingly enough not a single copper plate grant in Śāradā has been discovered so far. The earliest specimens are the legends an the coins of the Utpala or Varman dynasty (855/56-939 A.D.).[6] The earliest dated inscriptions discovered so far are the two inscriptions of the reign of queen Diddā (980/1-1003 A.D.), one incised on stone slab, discovered from a private house at Srinagar[7] and the second on the pedestal of an image of Bodhisattva Padmapaṇī and preserved in the S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar. The other important are : (1) the Arigom stone slab inscription of Laukika 73 or 1197-98 A.D., (2) the Kotihar inscription of the reign of Shihab-ud-din, dated (Laukika) 45 or 1369 A.D.,[9] (3) the Khonamuh stone inscription of the reign of Zain-ul-Abidin, dated Kali 4530 or 1428 A.D.[10] The last known inscription from Kashmir belongs to the end of the 18th century. It has been discovered at Digom or Kapil Mochan in the Shopian district and is dated (Vikrama) 1846 or 1789 A.D.[11]

LADAKH

A few inscriptions in Śāradā characters were noticed in the Ladakh area by Vigne,[12] Cunningham[13] and Francke.[14] Two of them mention the Bodhisattva Maitreya. One of them is dated in the 7th year, probably of the Laukika era.

JAMMU

In the Jammu province, a few inscriptions in Śāradā have come

6. *CMI*, pls. 4, 5; *JASB*, XLVIII, p. 18.
7. *EI*, XXVII, pp. 34 ff.
8, *EI*, IX, pp. 300-02.
9. Now preserved in the S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar.
10. *VIJ*, XVII, pp. 220-24.
11. *JASB*, VII, pp. 87-89.
12. *Travels*, Vol. II, p. 393.
13. *Ladakh*, p. 31.
14. *History of Western Tibet*, p. 52.

to light. Two of them were discovered at Dacchan[15] and Zaji-Nai[16] in the Doda district. That of Dacchan is dated in the reign or Śri Nanda-deva, who may be identified with the king Ananta of Kashmir. It is dated in the year 12 presumably of the Laukika era and corresponds to 1036 A.D. The other is comparatively of a late period and on Palaeographic grounds can be assigned to the 16th century A.D. Two more inscriptions were noticed by Vogel,[17] one in a ruined temple on the ancient site of Babor, ancient Babapur, 17 miles east of Jammu and the other on a stone *linga* at Kishtwar. Both the inscriptions are now too much defaced to be deciphered.

CHAMBA

The number of Śāradā inscriptions discovered from Chamba is considerable. They include inscriptions on stone, copper plate grants and votive inscriptions on images.[18] The earliest known Śāradā inscription from this erstwhile hill State is the Sarahan Praśasti[19] which is undated but on Palaeographic grounds can be assigned to the 9th century A.D.

KANGRA

Only a limited number of Śāradā records have come to light in Kangra so far. The most important and the well-preserved inscriptions are the well-known Baijnath Praśastis dated Saka 1126 or 1204 A.D.,[20] and a brief inscription engraved on the pedestal of a statuette of Jain Tirthankara Parśvanātha dated (Laukika) *samvat* 30 corresponding to 1254 A.D.[21]

15. *Antiquities of Marey-Wadwan*, pp. 24-25.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-14.
17. *Antiquities* I, p. 18.
18. These have been edited and published by Vogel in his *Antiquities of Chamba State*, Vol. I.
19. *op. cit.*, pp. 152 ff.
20. *EI*, I, pp. 97 ff.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 120.

DELHI

The use of the Śāradā alphabet in the Union Territory of Delhi is attested to by a stone slab inscription discovered at Palam, 12 miles south-west of Delhi.[22] Only the concluding one and a half lines are in Śāradā and the rest is in Nāgarī. The inscription is dated in the reign of Balban, Vikrama, 1337 or 1281 A.D.

22. *JASB.*, XLIII, pp. 104 ff.

CHAPTER V

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET IN MANUSCRIPT

We have seen above that the use of the Śāradā alphabet in the inscriptions dates from the later half of the 8th century A.D. The use of this alphabet in the manuscripts, however, is not known until the 12th century A.D., when we find it first used in a manuscript discovered from the village Bakhshali in the Peshawar district of West Pakistan.[1] The manuscript bears no date but on certain palaeographic considerations to be discussed subsequently, it can be assigned to the 12th century A.D.

The Bakhshali manuscript is an important mathematical work dealing with a variety of subjects on mathematics. It contains the earliest treatment of certain topics on algebra, such as, simple algebraic equations, linear equations involving several unknowns and simultaneous indeterminate quadratic equations.[2] The manuscript is written in incorrect Sanskrit and the rules of grammer have not been followed very strictly.

The manuscript is written in clear and bold Śāradā characters. The following peculiarities having some bearing on the probable age of the manuscript deserve notice.

1. The initial *a* (see Table 5A, Col. I) shows regularly a wedge at the foot of the vertical and displays two distinct forms, one with the open top and the other with the top closed.[3] The former occurs

1. The manuscript has been edited by G.R. Kaye, in *ASI*, New Imp. Series, Vol. XLIII, parts I and II.
2. *History of Hindu Mathematics*, Vol. II, pp. 36, 47, 258.
3. The examples of this form may be seen in folio 9 Recto, *l*. 6; 10 Verso *l*. 8; II Recto; *l*. 5; Verso, *l*. 7 etc.

regularly in the early Śāradā inscriptions (see Table 2A) but the latter does not appear before the 11th century A.D. It is found for the first time in some coins of Mahmud of Ghazni[4] (see Table 3A, Col. I) and in the Thundu copper plate inscription of Āsaṭa dated 1075 A.D.[5] (see Table 3A, Col. VI) where, however, it has been used only once.[6] The earliest extant inscription in which the sign has been used with more regularity is the Khonamuh stone inscription of Zain-ul Abidin dated 1428 A.D.[7] (see Table 4A, Col. II).

2. The initial *u* (see Table 5A, col. I) shows a developed form with a long steamer hanging down from the right top of the letter. This evidently marks the development of the earlier form found in the Sarahan Praśasti[8] (see Table 2A, Col. III) and the Chamba copper plate grant[9] (see Table 3A, Col. V) where the steamer is shorter in length and attached to the middle of the letter instead of the top.

3. The initial *e* (see Table 5A, Col. I) shows occasionally a much developed form which is not met with in the inscription and which resembles the modern *e* of the Devanāgarī.

4. *k* (see Table 5B, Col. I) occurs only in a single looped form. The double looped form occasionally met with in the inscriptions of the 12th century (see Table 3B and above p. 44) and more frequently in the inscriptions of the 14th and the subsequent centuries, (see Table 4B) does not occur in the manuscript.

5. *c* (see Table 5B, Col. I) shows both the earlier rounded form found in the Sarahan Praśasti[10] (see Table 2B, Col. III) and the later quadrangular form met with quite regularly in the inscriptions of 12th and the 13th centuries (see Table 3B).

6. *ḍ* shows a loop in the middle and a wedge at the lower end. The development of the central loop is not traceable in the extant

4. *CMI*, pls. VII.
5. *Antiquities*, I, pp. 197 ff.
6. In *ato l.* 21.
7. Marshall, Note, pp. 18ff, Deambi, B.K., *VIJ*, Vol. XVII, pp. 220-24.
8. *Antiquities*, I, pp. 152 ff.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 187 ff., Pl. XX.
10. *op. cit.*

Śāradā records before the 12th century A.D. It is found for the first time in the Salhi fountain inscription dated 1170 A.D.[11] (see Table 3B, Col. XII) and is also found in the Baijnath Praśastis dated 1204 A.D.,[12] (see Table 3B, Col. XVI).

7. The cerebral nasal (see Table 5B, Col. I) occurs in the same two forms as in the inscriptions of the 11th-13th centuries (see Table 4B). The ancient form with a small horizontal base found in the Sarahan Praśasti[13] (see Table 2B) and the Bhakund fountain inscription[14] (see Table 3B, Col. III) does not occur.

8. Besides the *y* with open top (see Table 5B, Col. I), the manuscript shows the form of the letter with the top closed by means of a small horizontal bar (see Table 5B, Col. I). The latter form is regularly met with in the Śāradā inscriptions after the 13th century, is also found in the two epigraphic records of the 12th century, viz., the S.P.S. Museum stone slab inscription of the reign of Jayasimha dated 1149 A.D. and the Arigom stone slab inscription dated 1197 A.D.[15] (see Table 3B, Cols. VIII, XIII).

9. The *upadhmānīya* (see Table 5B, Col. I) occurs in exactly the same form as found for the first time in the copper plate inscription of Chamba belonging to the 11th century (see Table 3B and above p. 47) and later quite regularly in the inscriptions of the 12th and the subsequent centuries.

10. The medial *o* (see Table 5C, Col. I) is more often expressed by the superscribed flourish and less frequently by the superscribed stroke combined with the sign for medial *ā*. As we have seen above p. 49), the tendency to express the sign more frequently by the superscribed flourish becomes common only after the 11th century.

11. The subscribed *ṭ* in the ligature *ṣṭa* (see Table 5D, Col. I) characterised by a semi-circular curve with a small slanting stroke to

11. *Antiquites*, I, pp. 216 ff.
12. *EI*, I, pp. 97 ff.; *Ind. Pal.*, Pl. V, Col. I.
13. *op. cit.*
14. *Antiquities*, I, pp. 177 ff.
15. *op. cit.*

the right, resembles the form of the copper plate inscriptions of the 11th century (see Table 3D).

12. The subscribed *th* (see Table 5D, Col. I) occurs only in the spiral form as is generally the case in the copper plate inscriptions of the 10th and the 11th centuries (See Table 5D, Col. I). In ligature *rth* it also shows occasionally the advanced S like form.

Thus it is clear from what has been noted above that the manuscript retains the earlier forms of several letters but shows in certain cases the forms which do not appear in the inscriptions before the 12th century A.D. Hence we will not be wrong if we assign the manuscript on palaeographic grounds to the 12th century A.D.

Another Śāradā manuscript of the 12th century, containing a commentary on Sanskrit grammar and discovered by Bhikkhu Rahul in Tibet, is referred to by R.S. Pandit in his *River of Kings*.[16] But unfortunately no details are given and the manuscript is not accessible.

Our next accessible manuscript in point of time is an old birch bark manuscript of *Muni-mata-maṇi-mālā*.[17] This manuscript bears no date, but on certain palaeographic considerations to be recounted below, it can be assigned to the 14th century A.D.

The manuscript is the earliest accessible Śāradā manuscript discovered so far in Kashmir where Śāradā has been the alphabet *par excellence*. The exact nature of the contents of the manuscript is not known. It is in an extremely worn out condition and the proper study of its contents is not possible in view of the extremely fragile and brittle condition of its birch leaves. However, leaving aside its contents, the manuscript is of great importance from palaeograhpic point of view. It is the only accessible manuscript which enables us to study the developments and changes that the Śāradā characters

16. *Appendix* J, p. 627, fn. 14.
17. The manuscript is now preserved in the MS Library of the Research Department of Kashmir Government. I owe the information about the title of the manuscript to the Ex-Head Pandit of the said Department.

undergo in the manuscript from 12th century A.D. to the 14th century A.D.

We shall now discuss below the forms of Śāradā characters used in the manuscript and see what developments do they display when compared to those of the Bakhshali manuscript noted above.

I. THE INITIALS VOWELS (See Table 5A, Col. II)

1. (a) The initial vowels *a* and *ā* occur regularly with closed tops. The earlier forms with open tops found fairly commonly in the Bakhshali manuscript are conspicuous by their absence. As noted above, the practice of closing the tops of *a* and *ā* by means of horizontal top bars becomes fairly regular and common in the inscriptions only after the 13th century A.D.

(b) The initial *ā* shows occasionally a curve at the foot of the right hand vertical in place of the usual wedge.

2. In initial *i* the top upper dots are converted into a curve with small upward strokes attached to its both ends. The similar form has been noticed above in the Khonamuh stone slab inscription of 1428 A.D.[18] (see Table 4A, Col. II).

3. The initial *ī*, *u* and *ū* do not manifest any spectacular change.

4. In initial *e* and *o* the wedges at the left top ends have been replaced by the vertical down strokes and their forms closely with those of the Kotihar stone slab inscription dated 1369 A.D.[19] (see Table 4A, Col. I).

5. The initial *au* is formed like *o* with the addition of a wedge at the right top end.

II. CONSONANTS (See Table 5B, Col. II)

1. *k* occurs regularly in a double looped form, the form which becomes common in the inscriptions only after the 13th century A.D. A peculiarity worth noticing in the form of our manuscript is that it

18. *op. cit.*
19. Now preserved in the S.P.S. Meseum, Srinagar.

occurs regularly without the top bar and the curve forming the loop on the left side of the vertical shows a slight twist towards the left at the upper end.

2. The other gutterals, *kh*, *g*, *gh* and *ṅ* do not present anything remarkable.

3. *c* occurs often in quadrangular form though the ancient circular form also occurs occasionally.

4. The conservative characters *ch* and *ij* display no change.

5. No instance of *jh* could be traced in a few folios of the manuscript that were examined by the writer for palaeographic study.

6. In *ñ* the earlier wedge at the left top end is changed into a vertical stroke. The same development was noticed above in the form of the Khonamuh inscription (see Table 4B, Col. II).

7. *ṭ* shows a fork at the right top end in place of the usual wedge or serif.

8. The letters *ṭh* and *ḍ* remain constant.

9. In *ḍh* the curve at the right end forms a circular loop with the base stroke.

10. *ṇ* occurs both with and without the left hand tail. When without the tail, it does not present anything remarkable. But in the tailed form, a significant peculiarity is noticed in the treatment of the tail which is represented by the vertical stroke instead of the usual long drawn slanting stroke.

11. Nothing noteworthy is presented by the dental group.

12. *p* also remains unchanged.

13. *ph* is highly cursive in shape and resembles the letter *h*.

14. A distinction appears to be made in the formation of *b* and *v*. The former is made more cursive and the latter angular. Moreover, the right hand vertical is lengthened downwards in case of *v* while in *b* it retains the same level as the left hand loop.

15. In *bh* the curve at the lower end is sometimes drawn upwards to touch the loop in the middle. This circular form of *bh* is commonly met with in the later Śāradā manuscripts of the 17th and the subsequent centuries.

16. *y* occurs in both the forms with the closed or open top. It besides, shows an inverted stroke like that found in the forms of Kotihar and Khonamuh inscriptions noted above (see Table 4B, Cols. I and II).

17. The consonants *r*, *l*, *v*, *ś*, *ṣ*, *s* and *ha* do not materially differ from those of the Bakhshali manuscript except that the curve forming the loop on the left side of the vertical in *v* shows a twist to the left at the upper end as in the case of *k* noted above.

18. Nothing is particularly remarkable about the *jihvāmūlīya*, the *upadhmānīya* and the *virāma* which occur in the same forms as in the Bakhshali manuscript save that *upadhmānīya* shows a small upward stroke at the left end.

III. THE MEDIAL VOWELS (See Table 5C, Col. II)

1. The medial *ā* is expressed as in the Bakhshali manuscript by a wedge, serif or a hook. The hook sometimes develops into a loop in case of *ṅā*. Peculiarity is noticed in *jā* where the vowel is expressed by a small triangle suspended from the right end of the top horizontal bar. This method of expressing medial *ā* in *jā* is noticed only in one case in the Baijnath Praśastis (see Table 3B, Col. XVI) but becomes fairly common both in the inscriptions and the manuscripts after the 13th century.

2. The medial *i* and *ī* are formed by long curves drawn to the left and the right of the consonant respectively. The small and sickle shaped curves found sometimes in the Bakhshali manuscript (see Col. I), are rare.

3. The medial *u* and *ū* continue to be rendered in the older fashion, the former by a wedge, a curve or a down stroke (in case of *ru*) and the latter by a flag like line or by the sign of subscribed initial *u*.

4. The medial *ṛ* does not materially differ in shape from that of the Bakhshali manuscript. It occurs both in the angular and the cursive forms. A peculiar form of the sign is noticed in *kṛ*.

5. The medial *e* is expressed either by the *pṛṣṭhamātrā* or by the superscribed stroke above the consonant. The former is important as it constitutes an important proof of the age of the manuscript. The practice of forming the medial *e* by the *pṛṣṭhamātrā* had become obsolete in Kashmir in the 15th century as is attested to by the evidence of Jonarāja[20] who while recounting an anecdote regarding a forgery in a deed of sale (*vikrayapattraka*) remarks, "in order to express the *e* following a consonant the clerks formerly used to write a stroke behind the consonants. But as in course of time the script (*lipi*) became changed, the writers of today[21] write the stroke expressing *e* over the consonant."[22] This would show that our manuscript where the earlier method is frequently employed must belong to a period earlier than the 15th century. The above evidence of Jonarāja is corroborated by the rare use of *pṛṣṭhamātrā* in forming the medial *e* in the later Śāradā manuscripts where the *pṛṣṭhamātrā*, as will be subsequently shown is restored to only occasionally to denote the medial *ai*.

6. The medial *ai* is likewise expressed either by the two superscribed horizontal strokes placed over the top of the consonant or by a *pṛṣṭhamātrā* combined with the superscribed *e* stroke.

7. The medial *o* is expressed as in the Bakhshali manuscript (see Col. I) and in the earlier Śāradā inscriptions of the 10th and the 11th centuries (see Table 2C) in three different ways : (i) by a *pṛṣṭhamātrā* combined with the sign for medial *ā* (ii) by the superscribed *e* stroke combined with the symbol for medial *ā* (iii) by the superscribed flourish. The first two methods are rarely employed in the inscriptions after the 13th century. In the manuscripts of the 16th and the

20. *Dvitīya Rājataraṅgiṇī*, 1025-37.
21. Evidently refers to the 15th century. Jonarāja was a contemporary of Zain-ul-Abidin (A.D. 1428-1470).
22. *op. cit.*, 1029-30.

subsequent centuries also, the two methods become obsolete and it is only the third method that is frequently employed.

8. The medial *au* is expressed as usual by a superscribed flourish combined with the sign for medial *ā*.

IV. LIGATURES (See Table 5D, Col. II)

Among the ligatures, the following deserve notice :

1. *ry* where the right half of the subscribed *y* is suppressed.

2. *rth* which closely agrees with the form of the Bakhshali manuscript noted above.

3. *rṇ* where the small vertical representing the superscribed *r* is missing and the *ṇ* sign is attached direct to the top bar. A peculiar form of the subscribed *ṇ* with a long drawn curve to the left and a loop to the right is specially noteworthy.

4. *rgh* where the small vertical for superscribed *r* suspended from the horizontal top bar is blended with the central stroke of subscribed *gh*.

5. *kṣ* where the superscribed *k* consists of a small curve to the left and a long drawn cursive stroke to the right reaching the level of the bottom of the subscribed *ṣ*.

6. *sth* in which the subscribed *th* is always S like in shape as usually the case in the inscriptions of the 12th and the subsequent centuries. The spiral form found in the earlier inscriptions of the 10th and the 11th centuries and quite frequently in the Bakhshali manuscript (see Col. I) is rare.

7. *jñ* where the subscribed *ñ* has an unusual looped form.

8. *tn* where the subscribed *n* is represented by a small down-stroke attached to the bottom of *t*.

We have studied above in detail the forms of the Śāradā characters employed in the manuscript. We have seen that the manuscript displays further development in the forms of *a*, *ā*, *i*, *e*, *o*, *k*, *n*, *bh*, *y* and *jā*. These developments as seen above, are noticed in

the inscriptions only after the 13th century. We have also noted that the manuscript employs in certain cases ancient methods of forming the medial *e* and *o* which became obsolete in Kashmir after the 15th century. This would show that the manuscript must belong to a period which is later than the 13th century and earlier than the 15th century. We may, as such, assign the manuscript on palaeographic grounds to the 14th century A.D.

We have no literary specimen to study the development of the Śāradā alphabet in the manuscripts in the 15th century. In the 16th century, the Śāradā alphabet reaches the final stage of its development as is illustrated by the following manuscripts discovered from Kashmir which though bearing no date can be, as will be subsequently shown, assigned to the 16th century on the palaeographic grounds.

1. The birch-bark manuscript of *Śākuntalā*.[23]
2. The birch-bark manuscript of the Ādi and the Sabha Parvan of the *Mahābhārata*.[24]
3. The birch-bark manuscript of *Kathāsaritsāgara*.[25]

The characters used in these manuscripts agree closely in the majority of cases with those of the birch-bark manuscript of *Muni-mata-maṇi-mālā* noted above. A few characters, however, display some significant changes. We shall study below these changes in detail.

23. The manuscript represents the Kashmirian recension of Kalidasa's *Śākuntala*. It was purchased by Bühler in 1875 A.D. in Kashmir and is mentioned in the Deccan College collection under No. 192. It has been described by Bühler in his *Kashmir Report*, p. 62. The forms of the letters in the table below have been taken from Bühler's *Ind. Pal.* Plate VI, Col. VIII, and *Anecdota Oxonancia*, Arian Series, 1, 3, Pl. 6.
24. This manuscript was purchased by Bühler in Kashmir and has been described by him in his *Kashmir Report*, p. 64. It is mentioned in the Deccan College collection of 1875-76 under No. 159, and has been utilised for the critical edition of the *Mahābhārata* (edited by Dr. V.S. Sukhtankar) and its siglum is *SJ* in the critical appratus of the said edition.
25. It is now preserved in the MS. Library of the Research Department of the Kashmir Government, Srinagar.

I. VOWELS (See Table 5A, Col. III-V)

1. In the initial *a* and *ā*, the earlier left hand lower curve below the connecting horizontal line is suppressed and the upper one is attached to the top horizontal bar by means of a small slanting stroke.

2. The initial *i* occurs in its earlier form with the two dots above and a curve below in the manuscript of *Śākuntala* (Col. III). In the other two manuscripts (Cols. IV, V) the vowel occurs in its later form as found in the manuscript of *Muni-mata-maṇi-mālā* noted above (see Col. II). In the manuscript of the *Mahābhārata* (Col. IV), the lower curve is very small and usually consists of a semi-circle or a small circle.

3. The initial *ī* resembles the forms of the Baijnath Praśastis (see Table 3A, Col. XVI) and the Khonamuh stone inscription of 1428 A.D. (see Table 4A, Col. II).

4. The initial *ū* shows an unusual form in the manuscript of *Śākuntala* (Col. III) in as much as the curve marking the length of the vowel is attached to the bottom of *u* instead of to its back.

5. The initial *ṛ* occurs in exactly the same form as in the Bakhshali manuscript (Col. I).

6. The initial *e* with a vertical to the left agrees closely with the form of the *Muni-mata-maṇi-mālā* (Col. II). The left hand vertical is straight in the manuscript of *Śākuntala* (Col. III) but shows a slight twist to the right at the lower end in the manuscripts of the *Mahābhārata* (Col. IV) and the *Kathāsaritsāgara* (Col. V).

7. The initial *o* resembles the form of the *Muni-mata-muṇi-mālā* (Col. II). In the manuscript of *Śākuntala* (Col. III) the vertical is drawn close in front of *u* with the result that the letter looks like the Roman capital B.

8. In the initial *au* the earlier wedge at the right top en is replaced by a small triangle.

II. CONSONANTS (See Table 5B, Cols. III-V)

Among the consonants the developments are noticed only in the following letters :

1. *ṅ* where the earlier wedge at the right top end is sometimes replaced by a semicircle, *e.g.*, in the manuscript of *Śākuntala* (Col.III) and sometimes by a small circle, *e.g.*, in the manuscript of the *Mahābhārata* (Col. IV).

2. *j* which retained its conservative character from the ancient Brāhmī to the 15th century A.D. now undergoes significant change and can be fairly regarded as a reliable criterion for age. The letter drops the central stroke and the top stroke is replaced by two small connected curves with a small upward stroke attached to them at the right end.

3. In *jh*, the left half consisting of a vertical with a wedge attached to its lower end remains unchanged. The right half, however, is replaced by the sign which resembles the letter *dh* in shape.

4. Clear distinction is made between *b* and *v*. The former bears a distinctive sign consisting of a horizontal top bar, a down-stroke suspended from it and big cursive loop attached to the downstroke on the left side. The letter is distinguishable by the downward prolongation of the vertical downstroke and by an angular loop on the left.

5. *bh* has a well pronounced wedge or a solid loop in the middle. The circular form of the letter noticed above in the manuscript of the *Muni-mata-maṇi-mālā* (Col. II) occurs occasionally in the manuscript of the *Mahābhārata* (Col. III). In our other two manuscripts, the earlier form with a semi-circular curve prevails.

6. *y* occurs exclusively with its top closed by means of a horizontal stroke. The form with an open top found occasionally in the manuscript of the *Muni-mata-maṇi-mālā* (Col. II) is rare.

III. THE MEDIAL VOWELS

As regards the medial vowels, the following peculiarities and developments deserve notice :

1. The medial *ā* in *jā* is expressed by a small circular loop attached to the right end of the top horizontal bar, in the manuscript of the *Mahābhārata* (Col. IV) and the *Kathāsaritsāgara* (Col. V). In the manuscript of *Śākuntala* (Col. III) it is denoted by a curve which issuing from the right end of the top horizontal bar touches the left hand vertical in the middle. The similar method of expressing the medial *ā* in *jā* is followed in the later Śāradā-manuscripts with the only difference that the curve touches the left hand vertical at its upper end instead of in the middle. It needs to be pointed out here, that in the letter *j* when accompanied by medial *ā*, the two newly developed curves at the upper end are regularly replaced by the older horizontal bar.

2. The medial *ū* is expressed, besides the usual flag like line attached to the lower end of the consonant, by the combination of the two curves of initial *ū*. These curves are attached to the bottom of the consonant, sometimes one below the other, sometimes back to back and occasionally they form very peculiar combinations, *e.g.*, in *bhū* and *sū* in the manuscript of *Śākuntala* (Col. III).

3. The medial *ṛ* is expressed generally by a semi-circular curve facing upwards. The peculiar forms are noticed in *kṛ* in the manuscript of the *Mahābhārata* (Col. IV) where it consists of a mere curve attached to the left limb of *k* and *smṛ* in the manuscript of the *Kathāsaritsāgara* (Col. V) where the curve has been drawn high above to touch the right end of the top bar.

4. The medial *e* is expressed exclusively by a horizontal stroke placed above the consonant.

5. The medial *ai* is formed throughout by the superscribed strokes except in the manuscript of the *Kathāsaritsāgara* (Col. V) where the older method consisting of a *pṛṣṭhamātrā* combined with the superscribed stroke is also employed occasionally.

6. The medial *o* is also expressed generally by a superscribed flourish save in a very few cases in the manuscript of the *Kathāsarit-sāgara* (Col. V) where it has been expressed in the older fashion, *viz.*, by a *pṛṣṭhamātrā* combined with the sign of medial *ā*.

Virāma

The long drawn steamer which represents the *virāma* in the earlier records becomes a long vertical in the manuscript of *Śākuntala* (Col. III) and occurs in the same form in the later Śāradā manuscripts.

IV. LIGATURES (See Table 5D, Cols. III-V)

Nothing is specially remarkable about the ligatures except what has already been stated above while discussing the ligatures of the manuscript of the *Muni-mata-maṇi-mālā*. Mention may, however, be made of the ligatures where *k* forms the first member. The shape of *k* in such cases continues to be the same as in that of the manuscript of the *Muni-mata-maṇi-mālā* (Col. II) but the long drawn curve to the right is now made comparatively thinner than the smaller one to the left. Also worthy of note are the ligatures where *r* forms the second member. In such cases, *r* is represented by a cursive downstroke attached to the upper consonant on the right side.

As has been pointed out above, none of our manuscripts bears any date. But our detailed study of the forms used in them would show that they belong to a period which is later than the 15th century and earlier than the 17th century A.D. They show the developed forms of *a*, *ā*, *j*, *jh* and *jā* which are not traced in the manuscript of the *Muni-mata-maṇi-mālā* or in the Khonamuh stone inscription of 1428 A.D. or the Peshawar Museum inscription of 1461 A.D. Besides, the form of *bh* which is often semi-circular in shape, the top bars which are comparatively shorter in length and the use of *pṛṣṭhamātrā* for the formation of medial *ai* and *o* point to a period, earlier than the 17th century A.D.

From what has been noted above, it is clear that our manuscripts represent the last phase of development of the Śāradā alphabet.

In the manuscripts of the subsequent centuries, the Śāradā characters occur in the same forms except showing minor changes here and there. The difference is noticed in the formation of the top bars which are comparatively shorter in the later manuscripts, in the form of *bh* which is exclusively circular in shape and in the rare use of *pṛṣṭha-mātrā* in the formation of medial *ai* and *o*.

Our above study of the use of Śāradā alphabet in the manuscripts will not be complete without studying the forms of the rarely occurring vowels *ṛ*, *ḷ*, *ḹ*. The forms of these letters are noticed among others, in a birch bark manuscript of '*Bālabodhinī*'[26] which contains a small treatise on grammar, and in the paper manuscript of the same work, dated *saṁ.*[27] Hijri 1158 (1745 A.D.) which contain a complete list of all the characters.

The initial *ṛ* is formed like *r* with the addition of a small triangle at the right top end.

ḷ is similar to *ṇ* in shape but has in addition the curve of medial *r* attached to the right limb at the lower end.

ḹ is formed like *ḷ* with the addition of a small triangle at the right top end as in case of *ṛ*.

These forms are illustrated in the accompanying Table 5A, Col. VI.

26. It is preserved in the MS. Library of the Research Department, Srinagar.
27. *Ibid.*

CHAPTER VI

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET
VARIATIONS IN FORMS IN THE INSCRIPTIONS AND THE MANUSCRIPTS

We have studied above the use of the Sāradā alphabet both in the inscriptions and the manuscripts. In this chapter we shall note the variations in forms that the Śāradā characters display in the inscriptions on the one hand and the manuscripts on the other.

As pointed out above, we have no Śāradā manuscript contemporaneous with the early Śāradā inscriptions of the 8th-10th centuries A.D. Our earliest Śāradā manuscript, viz., the Bakhshali manuscript[1] belongs, as seen above, to the 12 century A.D. We shall, as such, discuss below the variations the characters of this manuscript exhibit in their forms when compared with those of the following contemporary inscriptions:

(1) The Luj (Chamba) fountain inscription of the 1st year of Jāsaṭa dated Śāstra (41) 81 (1105-6 A.D.).[2]

(2) The S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar inscription of the reign of Jayasimha (Laukika) *sam*. 25 (1149 A.D.).

(3) The Tapar (Kashmir) inscription of the reign of Paramāṇḍadeva (Laukika) *sam*. 33 (1157 A.D.).[3]

(4) The Devi-ri-Kothi (Chamba) fountain inscription of Rājānka Nāgapala of the 17th year of Lalita-varman (1159-60 A.D.).[4]

1. Edited by Kaye, ASI, New Imp. Ser., Vol. XLIII.
2. *Antiquities*, I, No 28, pp. 202 ff., Pl. XXVIII.
3. Now preserved in the S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar.
4. *Antiquities*, I, No. 32, pp. 209 ff., Pl. XXX.

(5) The Salhi (Chamba) fountain inscription of Rājānaka Ludrapāla of the 27th year of Lalita-varman, Śāstra (42) 46 (1170 A.D.).[5]

(6) The Arigom (Kashmir) stone slab inscription (Laukika) *sam*. 73 (1197 A.D.)[6]

I. THE INITIAL VOWELS (See Table 6A)

Among the vowels, the variations are noticeable in the forms of the following letters:

1. *The initial ū*

The vowel shows an ususual form in the Bakhshali manuscript with a long steamer, marking the length of the vowel, hanging down from the top of the letter to its right. In the contemporary inscriptions the vowel does not occur. But in the Thunḍu copper plate grant of Āsaṭa-varman,[7] (11th century) and the Baijnath Praśastis (1204 A.D.)[8] it occurs in more common form with the length of the vowel marked by a curve attached to the back of the letter in the middle.

2. *The initial e*

It shows a much developed form in the Bakhshali manuscript, resembling the Devanāgarī *e*. In the inscriptions noted above, it occurs in the ancient triangular form.

II. CONSONANTS (See Table 6A)

The following variations are noticed in the consonants:

1. The right limb of *kh* in the Bakhshali manuscript is always cursive unlike the angular one of the inscriptions.

2. The Bakhshali manuscript presents an instance of the rare character *jh* not found in the contemporary inscriptions. Its form

5. *Antiquities*, I, No. 33, pp. 216 ff., Pl. XXXII.
6. *EI*, IX, pp. 300 ff.,
7. *Antiquities*, I, No. 26, Pl. XXVI and *Supra* (Table 3A, Col VI).
8. *EI*, I, pp. 97 ff. and *Supra* (Table 3A, Col. XVI).

differs from an instance of it found in the Sarahan Praśasti (9th century)[9] by the addition of an upward stroke attached to the foot of the vertical to its left.

3. The letter *ṭ* occurs frequently in its ancient circular form in the Bakhshali manuscript. In the inscriptions, however, the letter occurs mostly in its later form with a well developed top bar. Besides, the letter shows a knob at the right top end in the Bakhshali manuscript in place of the wedge or a serif found in the inscriptions.

4. The letter ḍ shows invariably a loop in the middle and a wedge at the end in the Bakhshali manuscript which, however, is not always the case in the inscriptions where either of the two are occasionally absent.

III. THE MEDIAL VOWELS (See Table 6A)

1. The curves of medial *i* and *ī* are usually longer in the Bakhshali manuscript than in the inscriptions.

2. The medial *u* in *rū* is formed in the Bakhshali manuscript by a downward steamer similar to one as noted above in *ū* and attached to *r* near the top. In the inscriptions it is expressed by a downward curve attached to the foot of *r* on the right side.

3. The flag like line of medial *ū* attached to the bottom of the consonants is usually longer in the Bakhshali manuscript than in the inscriptions.

IV. LIGATURES (See Table 6A)

1. The subscribed *th* is always spiral in shape in the Bakhshali manuscript. In the inscriptions, both the spiral and the S like forms are used, the latter more frequently.

2. *ṛ* as the final element in the ligatures is represented in the Bakhshali manuscript by a long slanting stroke attached to the bottom of the upper consonant and drawn from left to right. In the inscriptions the stroke is short and is drawn only to the left.

9. *Antiquities*, I, No. 13, pp. 152 ff., Pl. XV.

The characters of our next manuscript, the birch bark manuscript of *Muni-mata-maṇi-mālā*[10] (*c.* 14th century), differ materially in the general appearance from those of the only contemporary inscription, the Kotihar stone slab inscription of Shihab-ud-Din dated *sam* 45 (1369 A.D.).[11] The latter is written in very crude form of Śāradā and presents a number of variations in forms which, however, appear to be mainly due to the lack of skill on the part of the engraver. Among the good number of variations, the following deserve notice.

THE INITIAL VOWELS AND CONSONANTS (See Table 6B)

1. The initial *a* occurs invariably with its top closed by means of horizontal top bar in the manuscript of the *Muni-mata-maṇi-mālā*. In the contemporary inscription, this is not always the case and the letter also occurs with an open top.

2. The initial *e* shows a developed form in the manuscript with the wedge at the left top end converted into a vertical. In the inscription the letter occurs in its earlier form and retains the wedge.

3. The lingual *ṭ* occurs both with or without the top bar in the inscription. In the manuscript it regularly occurs with a flat top.

4. *ṇ* shows both forms, with or without the left hand downstroke in the manuscript. In the inscription, it always occurs without the left hand downstroke or tail.

5. Clear distinction is made in the formation of *b* and *v* in the manuscript. In the inscription, however, little distinction is made between the two and they bear similar forms often hard to distinguish.

5. The letter *bh* occurs also in the developed circular form in the manuscript. In the inscription it occurs only in the older semi-circular form.

6. In the manuscript *y* occurs in both the forms with its top closed or open. In the inscription it occurs exclusively with a closed top.

10. Preserved in the MSS. Library of the Research Department of Kashmir Government.
11. Now preserved in the S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar.

7. The wedges in the left limbs of *m*, *ś* and *s* are well defined in the manuscript than in the inscription. In the latter, the wedges are sometimes left often on one side.

THE MEDIAL VOWELS (See Table 6B)

1. The medial *a* in *jā* is formed by a small triangle suspended from the top horizonal bar in the manuscript. In the inscription, it is expressed in the older fashion by an upward stroke attached to the right end of the central stroke.

2. The older methods of forming the medial vowels, *e*, *ai*, *o* by the *pṛṣṭhamātrā* are frequently employed in the manuscript. In the inscription, the *pṛṣṭhamātrā* is rarely used and the vowels are generally expressed by the superscribed strokes.

In the following manuscripts and the inscriptions which on palaeographic grounds can be assigned to the 16th century, and which represents the last stage of the Śāradā alphabet, we notice striking differences in the formation of the following characters which show final developments in their forms only in the manuscripts but retain their earlier characteristics in the inscriptions.

Inscriptions

1. S.P.S. Museum storage vessel inscription dated (Vikrama?) 1583 (1526 A.D.)?
2. The Wular-Hama bath inscription.[12]
3. The Zaji-Nai stone inscription.[13]
4. The Ushkur (Baramulla) relief inscription.[14]

Manuscripts

1. The birch-bark manuscript of *Śākuntala*.[15]

12. It has not been edited so far.
13. *Antiquities of Marev-Wadwan*, p. 12 ff.
14. Now preserved in the Pennsylvania University Museum, Philadelphia, U.S.A.
15. See above p. 76 fn. 23.

2. The birch-bark manuscript of the *Ādi* and *Sabhā Parvan* of the *Mahābhārata*.[16]

3. The birch-bark manuscript of the *Kathāsaritsāgara*.

VARIATIONS IN THE FORMS OF LETTERS (See Table 6C)

The manuscripts show developed forms of the vowels *e, ai, o* and *au* with well developed verticals on the left, not traceable in the contemporary inscriptions.

2. The letter *j* retains its conservative character in the incriptions. In the manuscripts it displays marked development with the upper horizontal stroke replaced by two interlaced curves.

3. The manuscripts show the advanced forms of *jh*, not traceable in the inscriptions.

Besides, we notice following variations:

1. The forms of the initial *a* and *ā* as found in the manuscripts differ from those of the inscriptions by the placing of both the curves of the left limb above the connecting horizontal line.

3. The form of *c* with a big rounded loop in the left limb found in the Wular-Hama and Ushkur inscriptions is only occasionally met with in the manuscripts of *Śākuntala* and *Mahābhārata* where, however, the loops are comparatively smaller.

3. The loops and wedges in case of *d, bh, m, ś, s* are always solid and filled up in ink in the manuscripts while in the inscriptions they are often left blank.

4. The *pṛṣṭhamātrā* is occasionally used in the manuscripts, *e.g.*, in the manuscript of the *Kathāsaritsāgara* for expressing the medial vowels *e, ai* and *o*. In the inscriptions it is rarely employed and the vowels are always denoted by the superscribed strokes. As pointed

16. See above p. 76 fn. 24.
17. See above, p. 76, fn. 25.

out above, the last instance of the use of the *pṛṣṭhamātrā* in the inscriptions, is provided by the Peshawar Museum inscription of 1461 A. D. where it has been resorted to only once to denote the medial *ai* in *kai*.

5. *k* as the first member of ligatures assumes a peculiar shape both in the manuscripts and the inscriptions. In both, the right limb is far greater in length than the former. In the manuscripts, however, the right limb is generally thinner than the left.

6. The manuscripts, owing to the largeness of their content, present a wide variety of ligatures and a good number of digraphs and trigraphs. In the inscription which are generally smaller in extent such a variety is but rarely found.

We have thus studied the variations in the forms of the Śāradā characters in the inscriptions and manuscripts. We have also seen that the manuscripts illustrate the final developments in the forms of *a*, *ā*, *e*, *j*, *jh*, not traceable in the contemporary inscriptions. This corroborates the generally accepted principle that the characters of the manuscripts are generally more advanced in forms than those of the contemporary inscriptions.

18. *EI*, X, pp. 79 ff., and Pl.

TABLE NO. I A

MAURYA AND POST MAURYA ALPHABETS

CHIEF PECULIARITIES

I	II		III	IV	V	VI	
KALSI ROCK EDICT	DELHI TOPRA		INSCRIPTIONS OF ŚODĀSA	COINS OF AGATHOCLES AND PANTALEAN	KANHIARA INSCRIPTIONS	MATHURA INSCRIPTIONS	
	1-6 EDICTS	7TH EDICT					
a	kh	a	k	ṣ	ṣ	vr	
k	d	kh	d				
kh	m	ḍh	p				
ch	l	t	ṣ				
j		y	di				
ś			ni				
ṣ			go				
śā							
ge							

TABLE NO. I B

KUṢĀṆA AND GUPTA ALPHABETS

CHIEF PECULIARITIES

I		II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII		
KUṢĀṆA-	INSCRIPTIONS	ABBOTABED INSCRIPTION	MATHURA INS. G.E. 61	MATHURA INS. OF CHANDRAGUPTA II	SHORKOT INSCRIPTION	TUSAM INSCRIPTION	LAHORE SEAL	BOWER MANUSCRIPTS		
a	y	m	ā	mau		a	mo	a	k	y; yai; tai
ā	ś	m	g	dau	k	m	h	ā	ṅ	l; ye
i	ṣ		ś	sya	ṭṭh	y		i	j	ś; ko; dau; bau
u	s		th	sya	n	sya		ī	ṭ	s; tya
e	mā		y	sya	b	l		u	ṇ	śā; gā; lā
k	si		s	m	m			ṛ	n	mi
ṅ	ku		vi	m	bu			ai	bh; ph	bu; bhū
d	gr		gu	m	pu			o	bh	ṛ
n	ko		dho		kṣu			au	m	te; de

TABLE No. I C

POST GUPTA ALPHABET 6TH TO 8TH CENTURY A.D.

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
	KURA INSCRIPTION	NIRMAND PLATE	SONEPAT SEAL	HATUN INSCRIPTION	GILGIT MANUSCRIPTS	BHARAMOR & CHITRAHI INSC.	GUM STONE INSC.	TUR ROCK INSC.	PROLI-RA-GALA INSC.	SVAIM INSC.
a	स			अ	अ					
ā	[illegible]	[illegible]			अु	अा, अ				
i		[illegible]			[illegible]					
u		उ			उ उ					
ū					[illegible]					
o					[illegible]					
k		क		क	क					
kh					ख ख					
g	[illegible]			ग	ग					
ṅ					[illegible]					[illegible]

TABLE NO IC CONTD.

POST GUPTA ALPHABET 6TH - 8TH CENT. A.D.

		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
		KURA INSC.	NIRMAND PLATE	SONEPAT SEAL	HATUN INSC.	GILGIT MANUSCRIPTS	BHARAMOR INSC.	GUM STONE INSC.	TUR ROCK INSC.	PROLI-RA-GALA INSC.	SAVIM INSC.
1	t				[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]			[illegible]
2	th		[illegible]			[illegible]					
3	d						[illegible]				
4	n				[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]				
5	p				[illegible]	[illegible]					
6	bh				[illegible]	[illegible]					
7	m	[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]				
8	Y	[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible]	[illegible]
9	r						[illegible]			[illegible]	
10	v				[illegible]	[illegible]					
11	ś					[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible]		[illegible]
12	ṣ							[illegible]			
13	s	[illegible]			[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible]	[illegible]
14	Jih.		[illegible]			[illegible]					
15	Upa.		[illegible]			[illegible]					

TABLE I C (CONTD.)

POST GUPTA ALPHABET 6th – 8th CENT. A

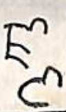
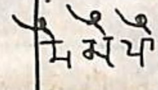
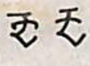
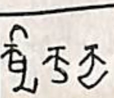
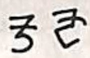
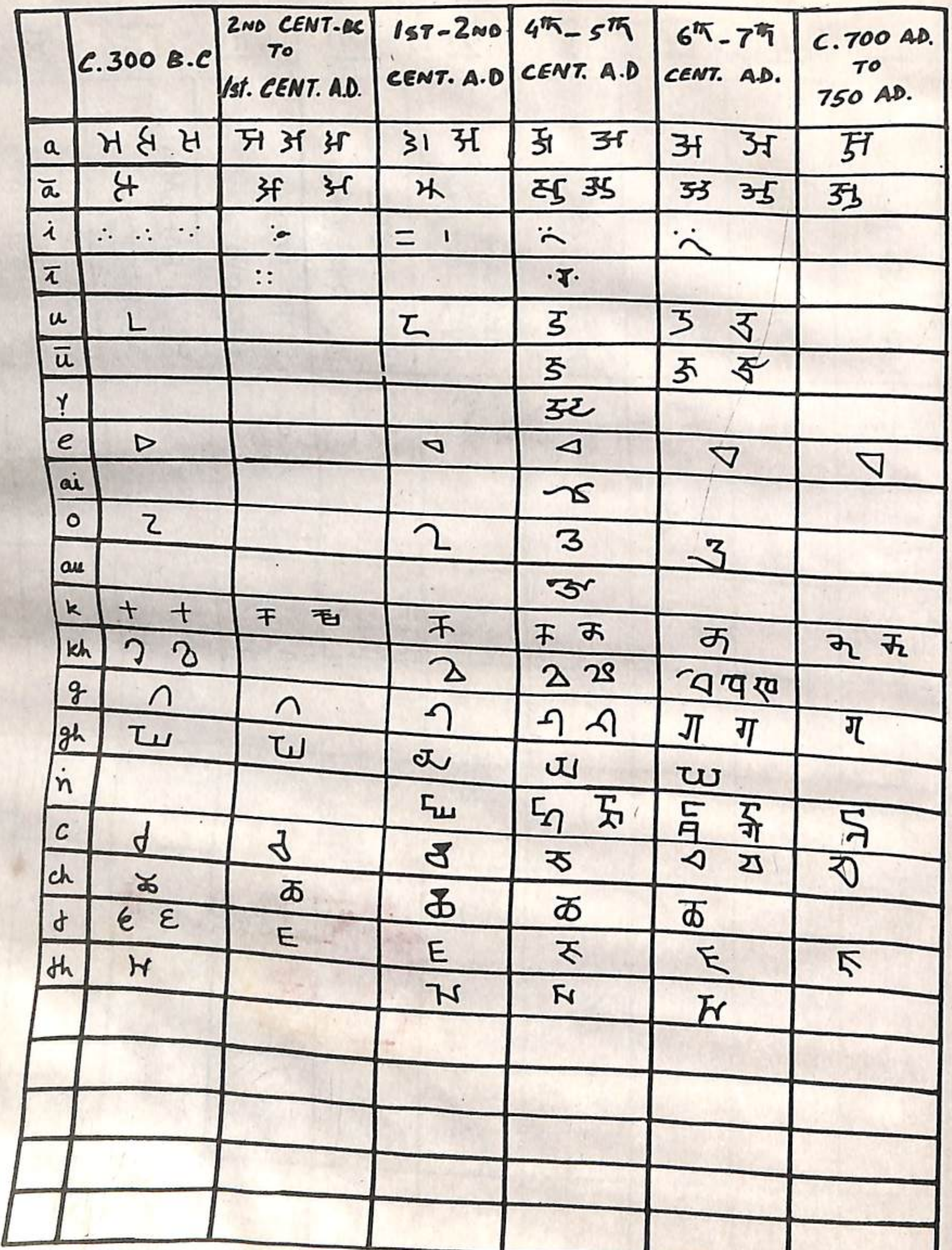
I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
KURA INSCRIPTIONS	NIRMAND PLATE	SONEPAT SEAL	HATUN INSCRIPTIONS	GILGIT MSS.	BHARAMOR INSCRIPTIONS	GUM STONE INSCRIPTIONS	TUR ROOK INSCRIPTIONS	PROLI-RA-GALA INSCRIPTIONS	SVAIM INSCRIPTIONS
									
									
									
									
									
									
									

TABLE NO. ID

THE BRĀHMĪ ALPHABET OF NORTH-WESTERN INDIA

C. 300 B.C. TO C. 750 A.D.



THE BRAHMI ALPHABET OF NORTH-WESTERN INDIA

C. 300 B.C. TO C. 750 A.D.

TABLE NO I D CONTD.

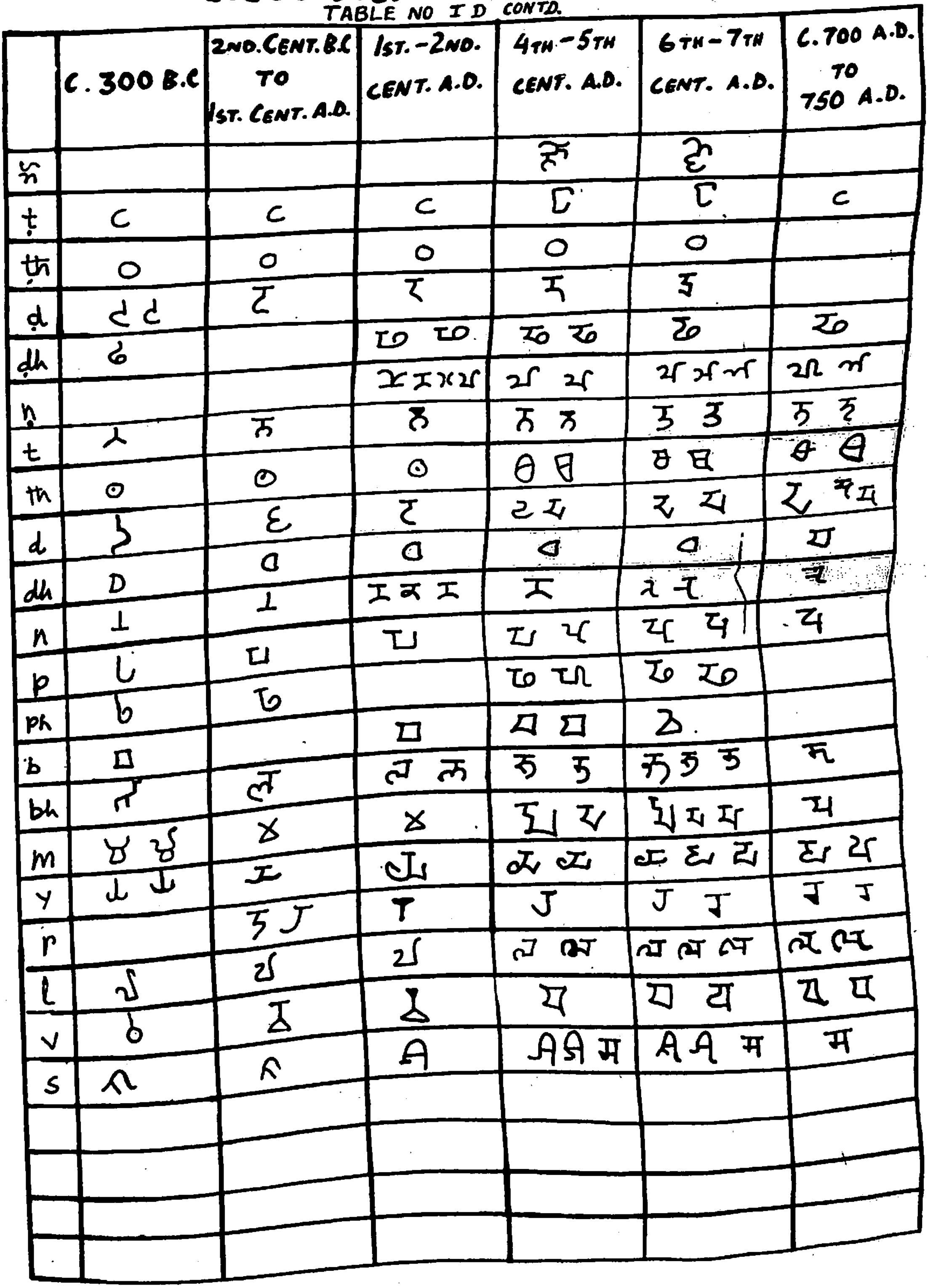


TABLE NO. I D CONTD.

THE BRĀHMĪ ALPHABET OF NORTH-WESTERN INDIA

C. 300 B.C TO C. 750 A.D

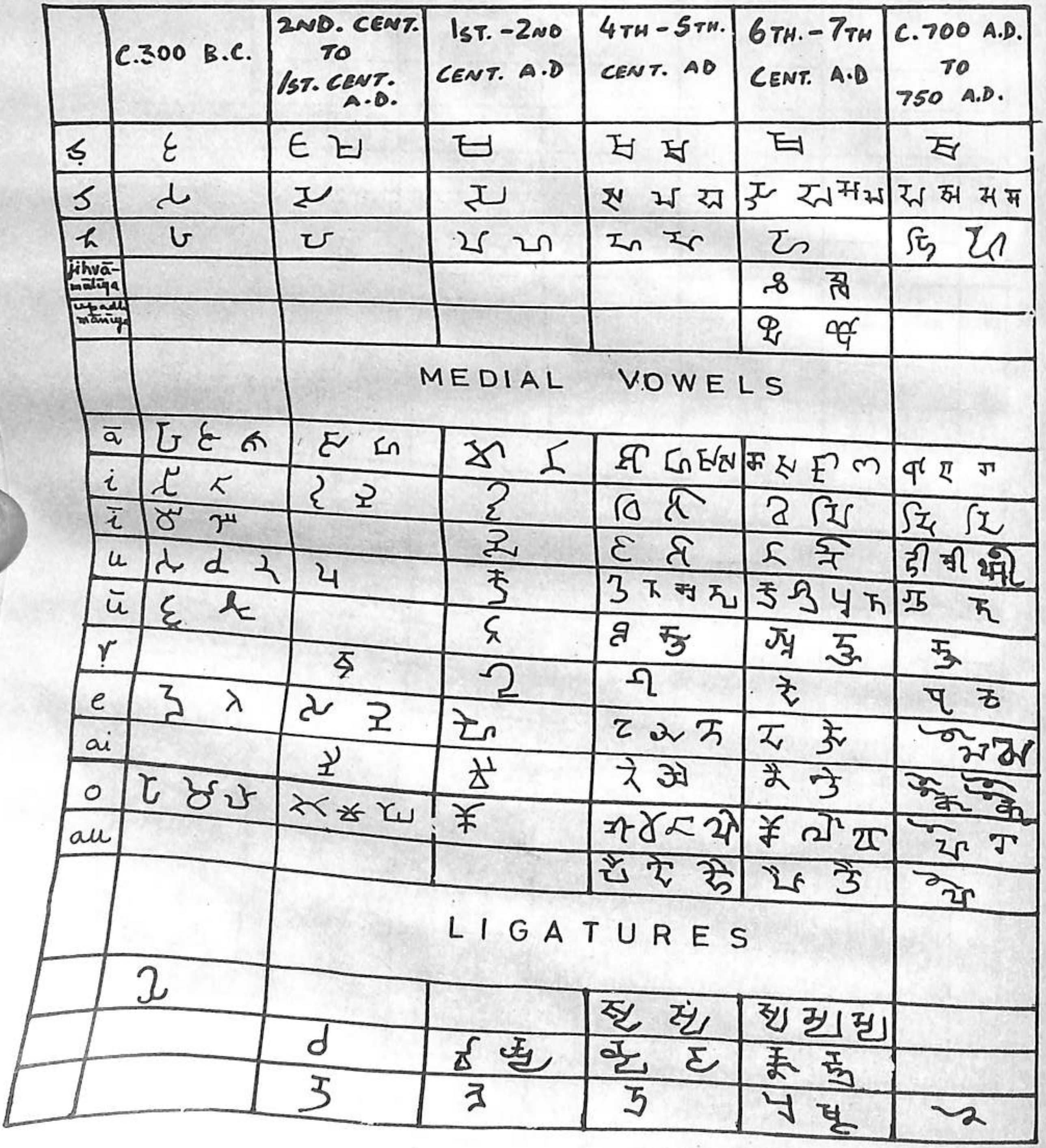


TABLE NO. 2A

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET

8TH — 10TH CENTURY A.D.

VOWELS

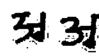
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX
	HUND INSCRIPTION (HARSHA) 168 - 69 = A.D. 774-75	COINS OF UTPĀLS A.D. 855 - 910 A.D	SARAHAN PRASASTI C. 9th CENTURY	DEWAI INSCRIPTION C. 940 - 980 A.D	BARIKOT INSCRIPTION C. 960 - 980 A.D	S.P.S MUSEUM IMAGE INSCRIPTION (L) 65 = A.D 989	SRINAGAR INSCRIPTION (L) 68 = A.D 992	BRAHMOR COPPER PLATE 10th CENTURY	SUNGAL COPPER PLATE 10th CENTURY
a									
ā									
i									
ī									
u									
ū									
e									
o									

TABLE NO. 2 B

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET

8th – 10th CENTURIES A.D.

CONSONANTS

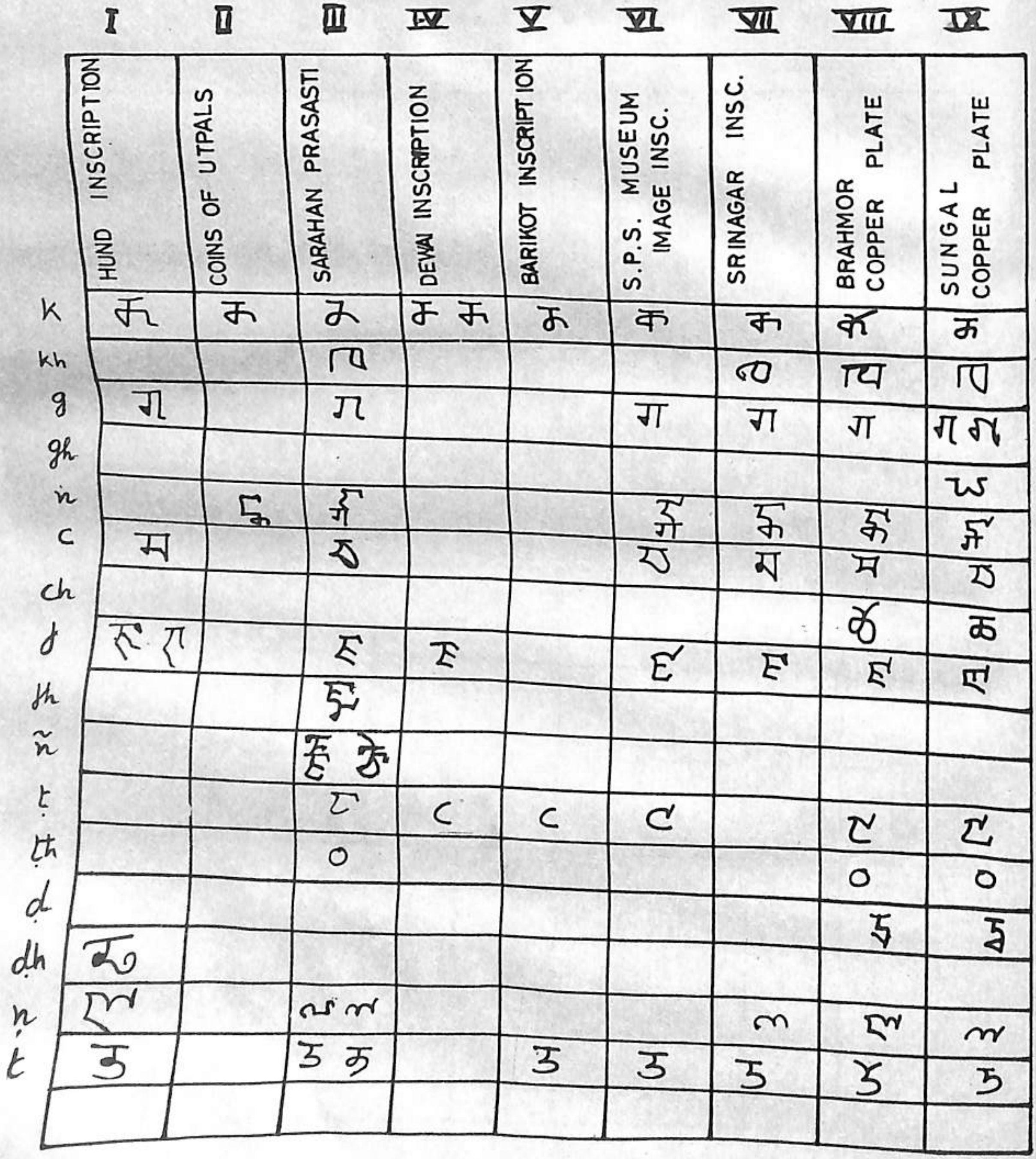


TABLE NO. 2B (CONTD.)

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET

8th – 10th CENTURIES A.D

CONSONANTS

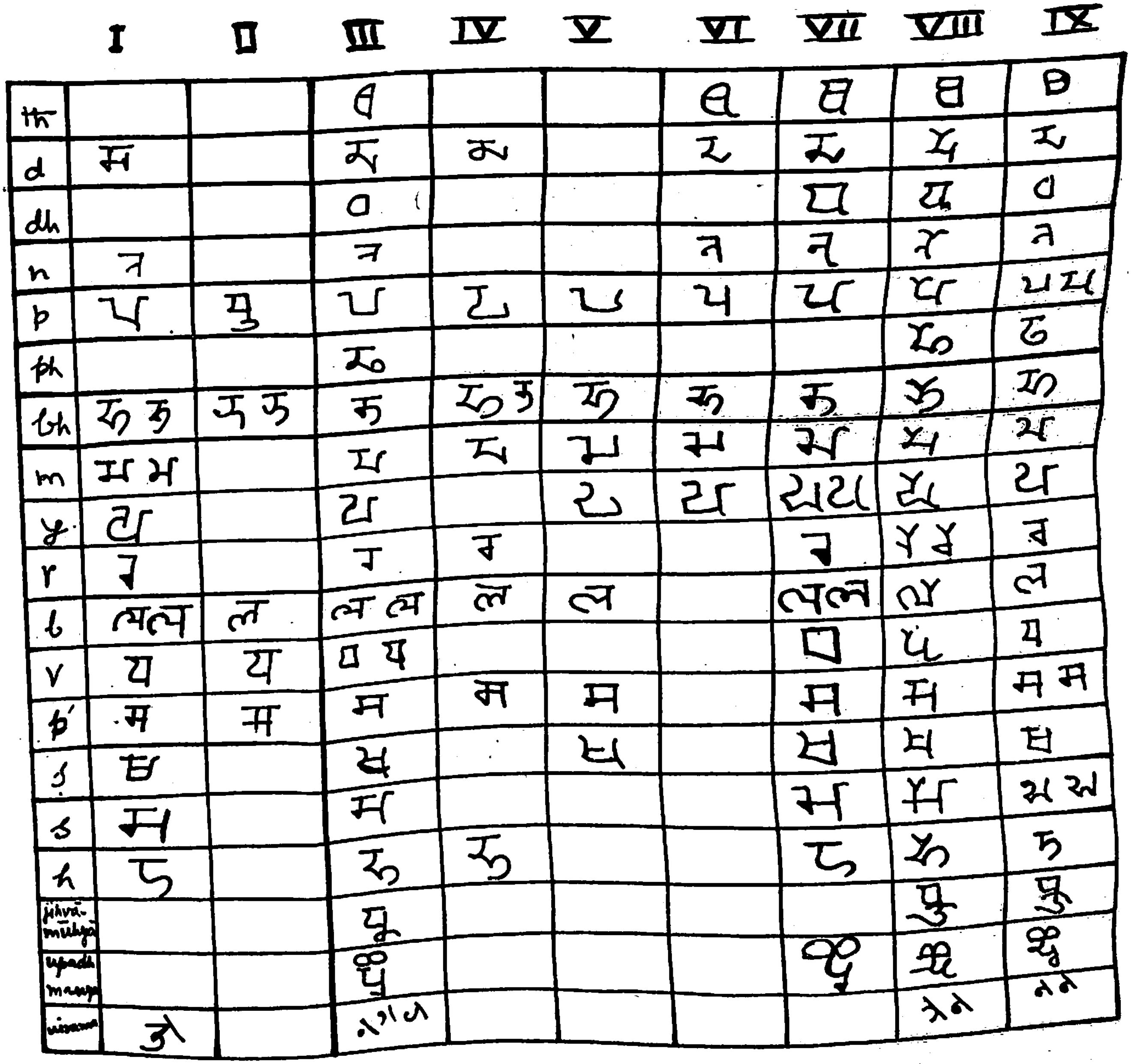


TABLE NO. 2C

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET

8th — 10th CENTURIES A.D

MEDIAL VOWELS

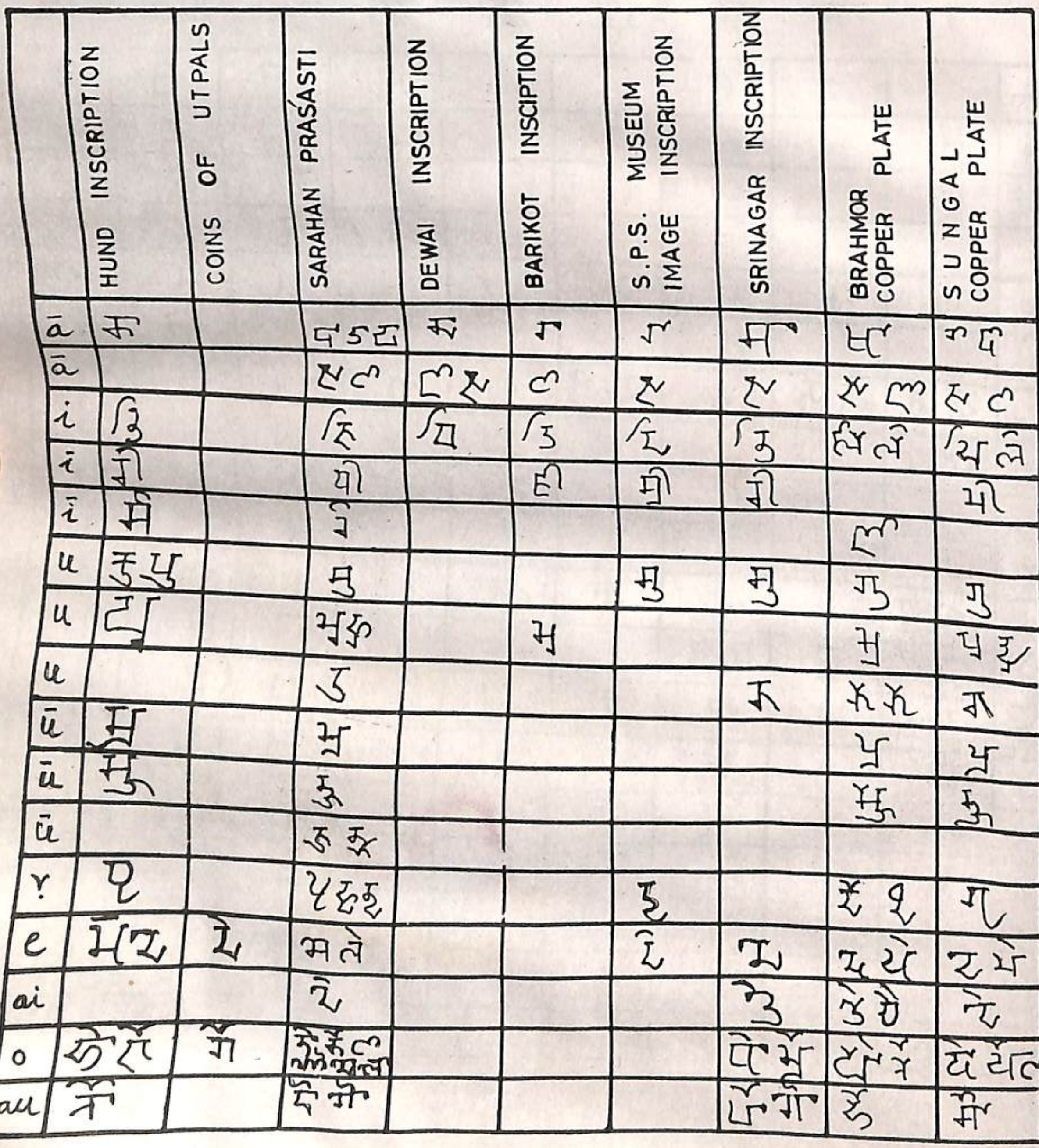


TABLE NO. 2D

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET

8th – 10th CENTURIES A.D.

LIGATURES

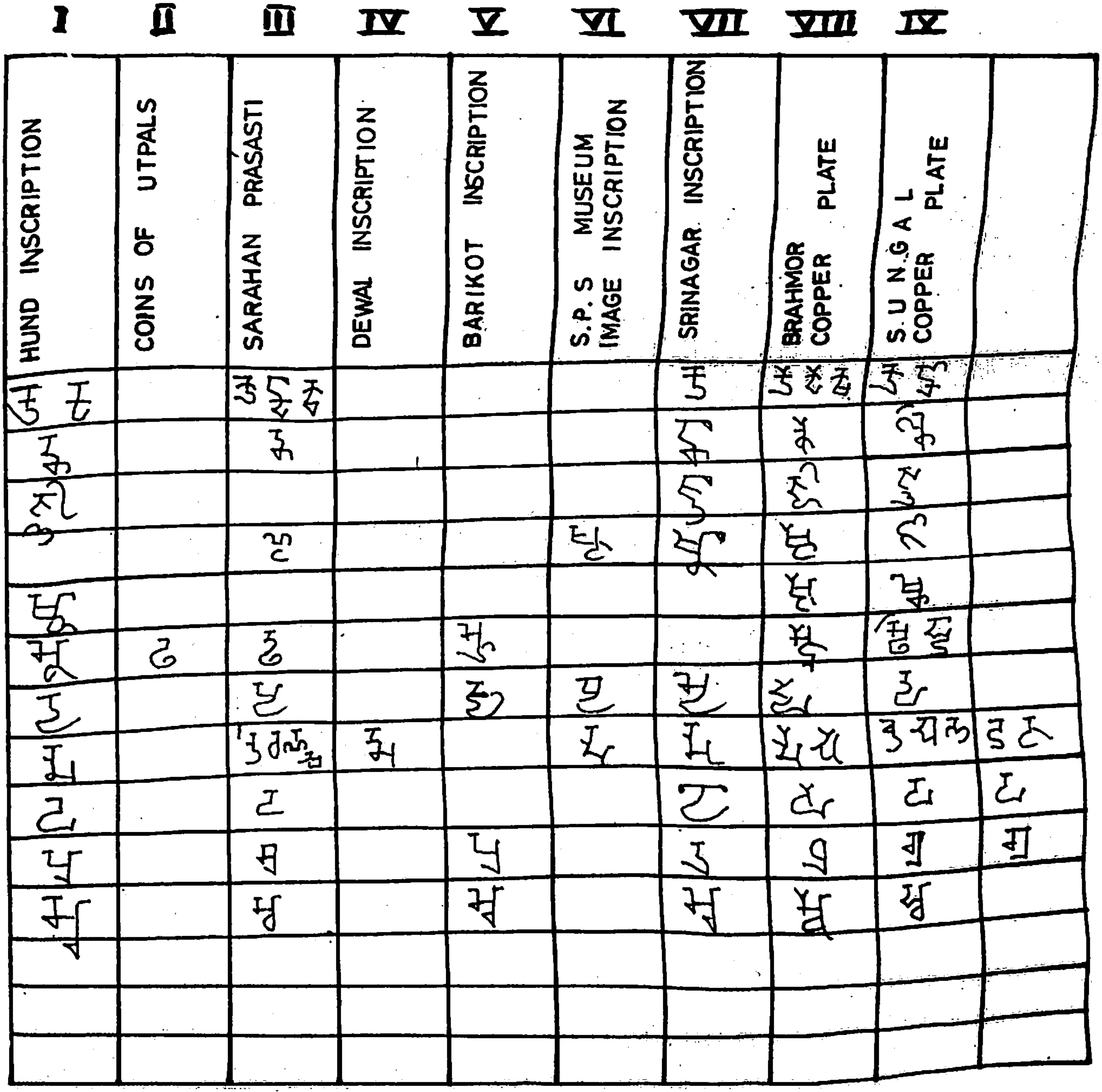


TABLE NO. 3A

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET

11th – 13th CENTURIES

VOWELS

No.	Source
I	COINS OF RULERS OF KASHMIR & MAHMUD OF GHAZNI
II	DACCHAN STONE INSCRIPTION (L) 12. A.D.– 1036
III	BHAKUND INSCRIPTION ŚĀSTRĀ (410) A.D. 1028–29
IV	KULAIT COPPER PLATES OF SOMAVARMAN & ASATAVARMAN, 11TH CENT.
V	CHAMBA COPPER PLATE OF SOṂAVARMAN 11TH CENT.
VI	THUNDU COPPER PLATE OF ASTAVARMAN, 11TH CENT.
VII	LUJ FOUNTAIN INSC. ŚĀSTRĀ (41) 81 A.D – 1105–6
VIII	S.P.S MUSEUM INSC. OF JAYASIMHA A.D. 1159 (L) 35
IX	TAPAR INSC. OF PARAMĀṆḌA – DEVA (L) 23 (A.D. 1157)
X	DEVI-RI-KOTHI INSC. OF RAJĀNAKA NĀGAPĀLA (AD. 1159–61)
XI	NĀRĀYAṆA IMAGE INSC. OF R. G NĀGAPĀLA.
XII	SALHI FOUNTAIN INSC. OF R. LUDRAPĀLA ŚĀSTRA (42) 46 (A.D. 1170)
XIII	ARIGOM STONE INSC. OF (L) 73 (AD. 1197)
XIV	DEVI-RI-KOTHI INSC. OF R. RAṆĀPĀLA
XV	MULA KIHAR FOUNTAIN INSC.
XVI	BAIJNATH PRASASTIS SAKA – 1126 A.D. – 1204
XVII	SAI FOUNTAIN INSC. OF AJAYAPĀLA. ŚĀSTRĀ I (AD. 1225?)
XVIII	BIJBEHARA STONE INSC. OF RĀJADEVA (SAKA)-58 (A.D. 1236)

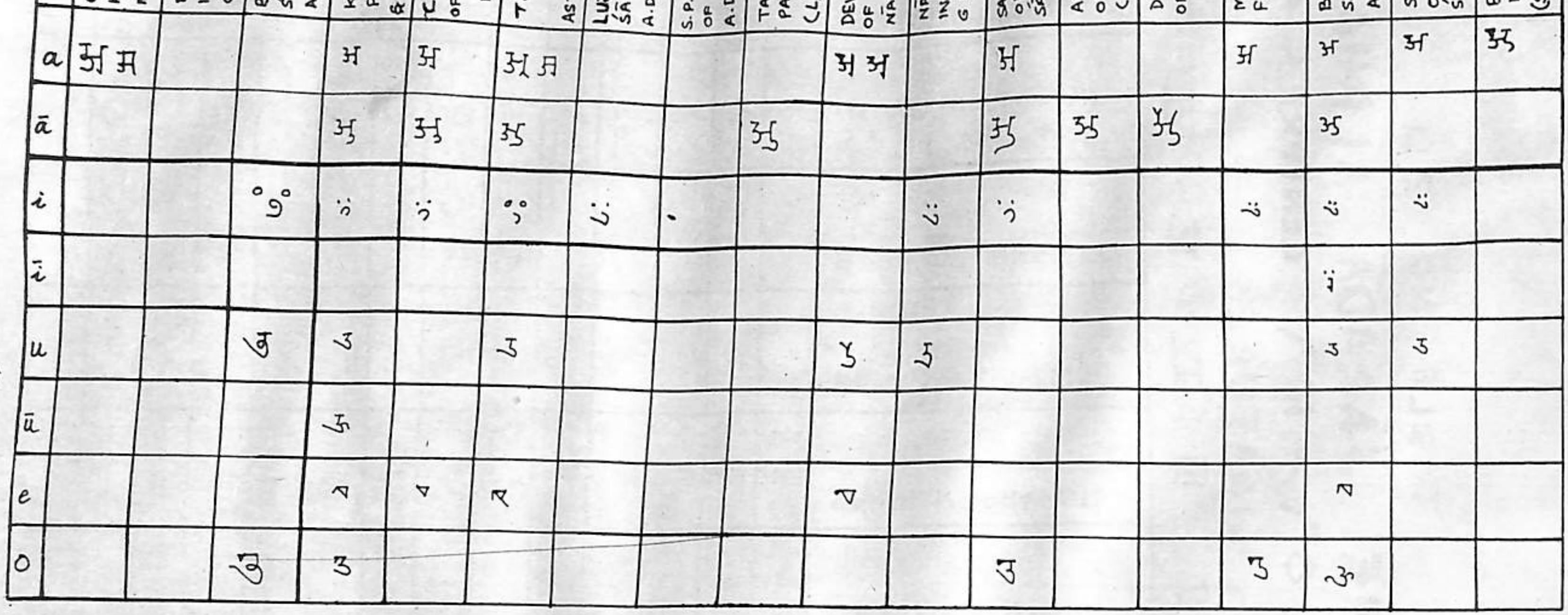


TABLE NO. 38

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET

11th – 13th CENTURIES

CONSONANTS

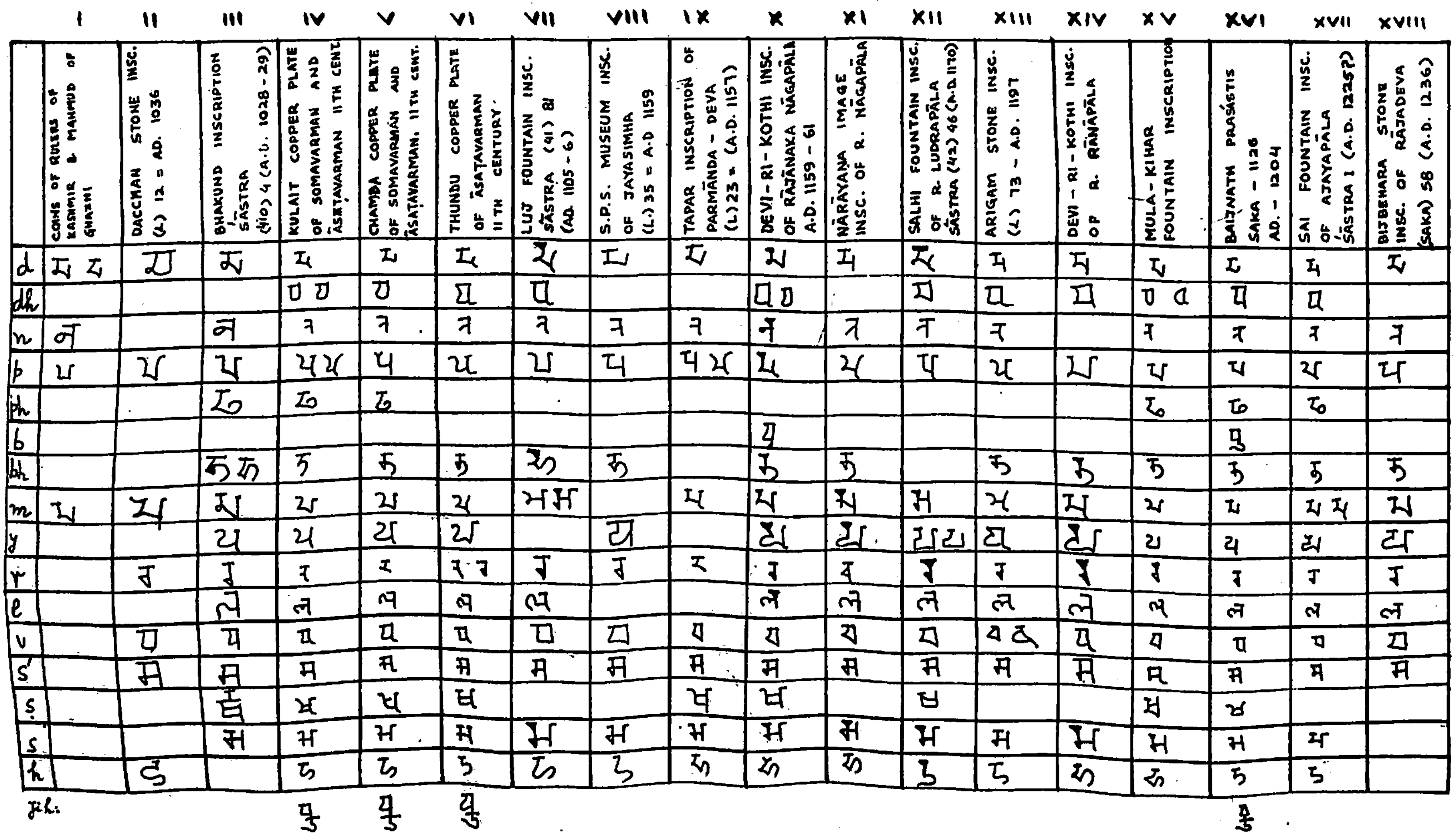


TABLE NO. 38. CONTD.

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET

11th – 13th CENTURIES

CONSONANTS

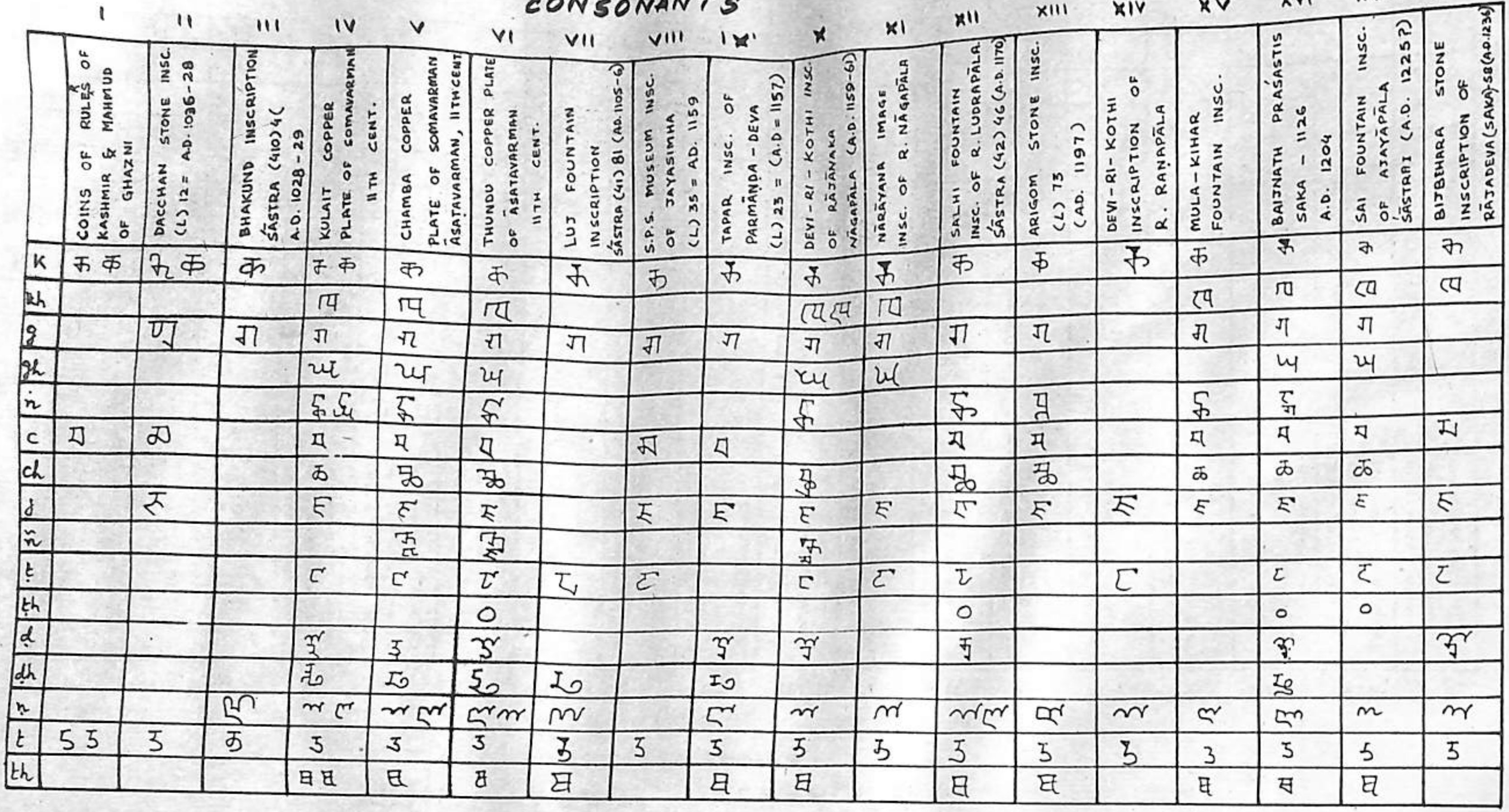


TABLE NO. 3C

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET

11th – 13th CENTURIES

MEDIAL VOWELS

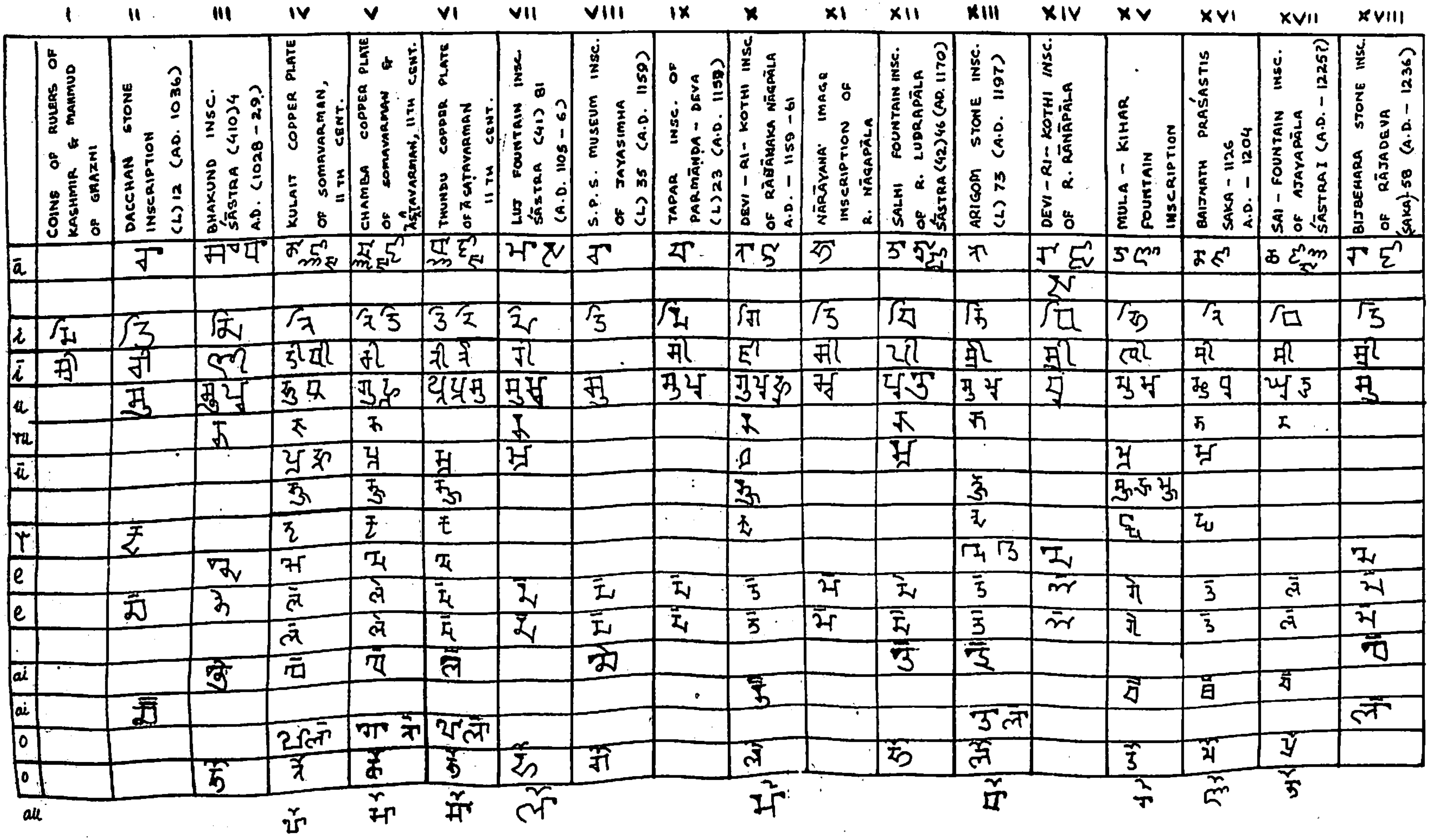


TABLE NO. 30.
THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET
11th — 13th CENTURIES
LIGATURES

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	VX	X	XI	XII	XIII	XIV	XV	XVI	XVII	XVIII
	COINS OF RULERS OF KASHMIR & MAHMUD OF GHAZNI	DACCHAN INSC. (L) 12 (A.D. 1036)	BHAKUND INSC. ŚĀSTRA (410) 4 A.D. — 1028	KULAIT COPPER PLATE OF SOMAVARMAN 11 TH CENT.	CHAMBA GRANT OF SOMAVARMAN & ĀSAṬAVARMAN	THUNDU GRANT OF ĀSAṬAVARMAN 11 TH CENT.	LUJ FOUNTAIN INSC. ŚĀSTRA (41) 81 A.D. 1105 – 6	S.P.G. MUSEUM INSC. OF JAYASIMHA L. 25 (A.D – 1149)	TAPAR INSC. OF PARAMĀṆḌA – DEVA (L) 23 = (A.D. 1157)	DEVI - RI - KOTHI INSC. OF R. NĀGAPĀLA A.D. 1159 - 61	NĀRĀYANA IMAGE INSC. OF NĀGAPĀLA	SALHI FOUNTAIN INSC. OF R. LUDRAPĀLA ŚĀSTRA (42) 46 (1170 A.D.)	ARIGAM INSCRIPTION (L) 73 (A.D. 1197)	DEVI – RI – KOTHI INSCRIPTION OF RAṆAPĀLA	MUL - KIHAR FOUNTAIN INSCRIPTION	BAIJNATH PRAŚASTIS ŚAKA – 1126 A.D. — 1204	SAI FOUNTAIN INSC. OF AJAYAPĀLA ŚĀSTRAI (A.D. 1225?)	BIJBEHARA INSC. OF RĀJADEVA ŚAKA - SB (A.D. 1236)
sth																		
rth																		
pr																		
ṣṭ																		
ṣṭh																		
jñ																		
														ṭṭā	ru			
						ntty								dy	gry			
						ṣkā												
													kkyc					
									VIRĀMA									

TABLE NO. 4A.

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET

14^{TH} – 16^{TH} CENTURIES

VOWELS

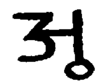
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
	KOTIHER INSCRIPTION (L.) 45 (A.D 1369)	KHONAMUH INSC. KALI 4530 (A.D. 1420)	PESHAWAR MUSEUM INSCRIPTION L.538 (A.D. 1461)	HARIPARBAT GRAVE STONE INSCRIPTION (L.) 60 (A.D. 1484)	USHKUR RELIEF INSCRIPTION (L.?) 82 (A.D. 1506?)	S.P.S MUSEUM STORAGE VESSEL INSC.	WULAR – HAMA INSCRIPTION c. 16th CENT.	ZAJI – NAI INSCRIPTION c. 16th CENT.
a								
ā								
i								
ī								
u								
e								
o								

TABLE NO. 4B

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET

14TH – 16TH CENTURIES

CONSONANTS

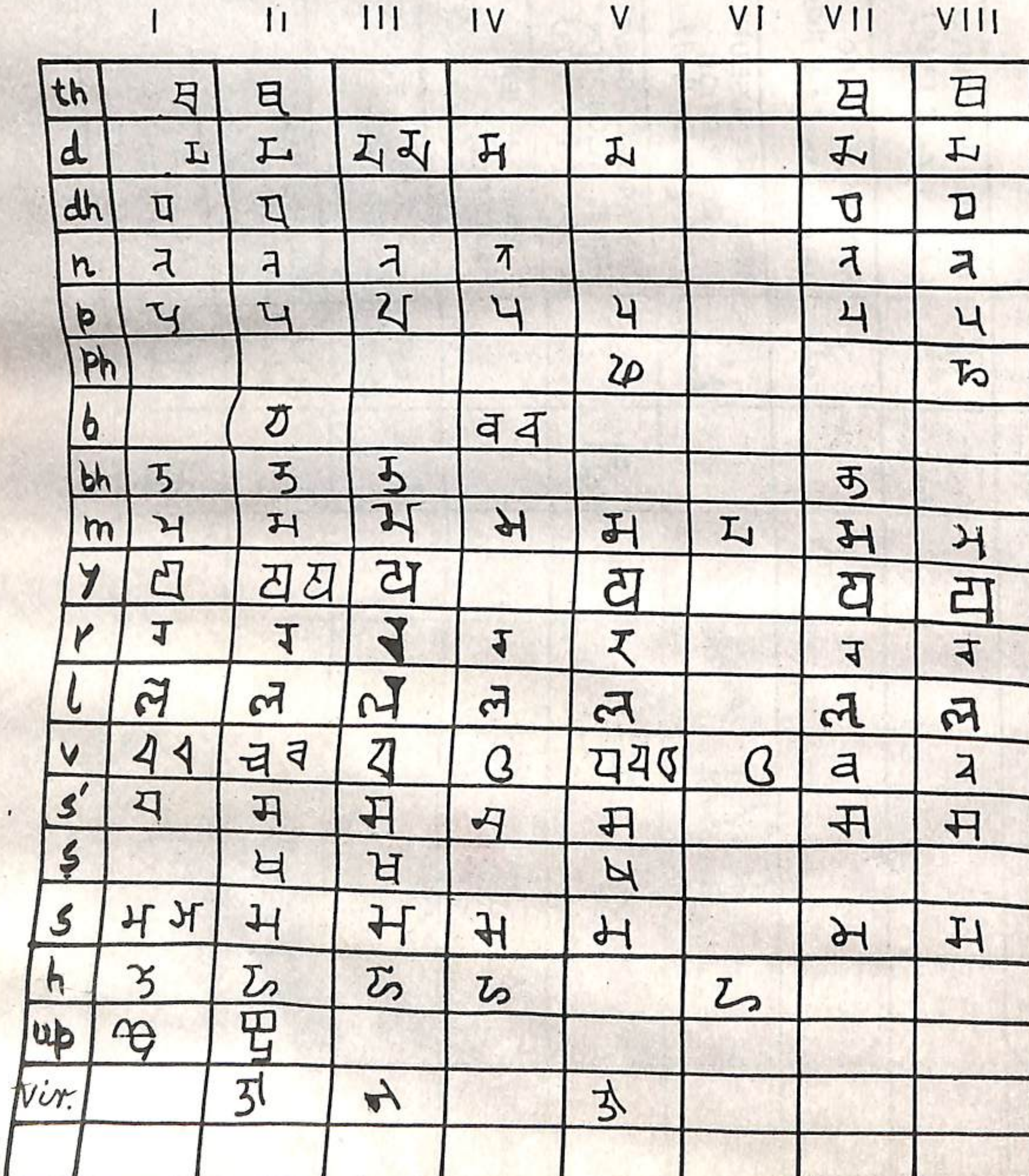


TABLE NO. 4 B CONTD.

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET

14TH — 16TH CENTURIES

CONSONANTS

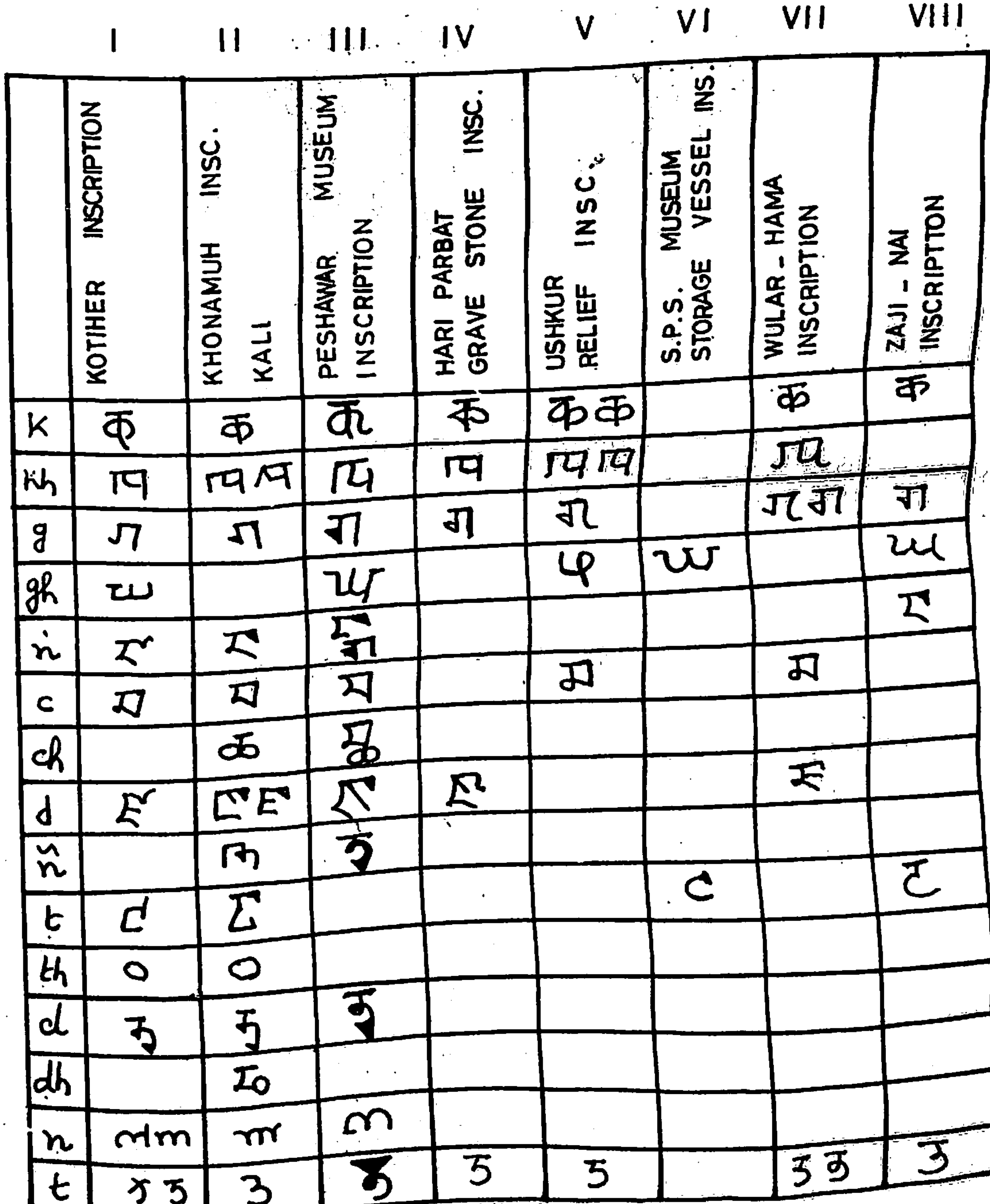


TABLE NO. 4c

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET

14TH — 16TH CENTURIES

MEDIAL VOWELS

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
	KOTIHER INSC.	KHONMUH INSC. KALI 4530	PESHAWAR MUSEUM INSCRIPTION.	HARIPARBAT STONE GRAVE STONE INSC.	USHKUR RELLEF INSCRPTION	S.P.S. MUSEUM STORAGE VESSEL INS.	WULAR.-HAMA INSCRIPTION	ZAJI - NAI INSCRIPTION
ā	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
i	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible]	[illegible]
ī	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]				[illegible]	[illegible]
u	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible]	[illegible]
ū	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]					
ṛ	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]				[illegible]
e	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible]	[illegible]
ai	[illegible]	[illegible]						
o	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible]		[illegible]	
au	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible]			[illegible]

TABLE NO. 4D

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET

14TH 16TH CENTURIES

LIGATURES

I	II	III	IV	IVI	VI	VII	VIII	VIII
	KOTIHER INSC.	KHONAMUH INSC.	PESHAWAR MUSEUM INSCRIPTION	HARIPARBAT GRAVE STONE INSC.	USHKUR RELIEF INSCRIPTION	S.P.S. MUSEUM STORAGE VESSEL INSC.	WULAR - HAMA INSC.	ZAJI - NAI INSC.
	ṛṣ					rm	rm	
	śm			sm			ṣm	sm
jña	jña, śṅ							
	ṛṣ							
	rm			br				
				hm				
							kṣ	

TABLE NO. 5A

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET IN MANUSCRIPTS

12 – 16TH CENTURIES

VOWELS

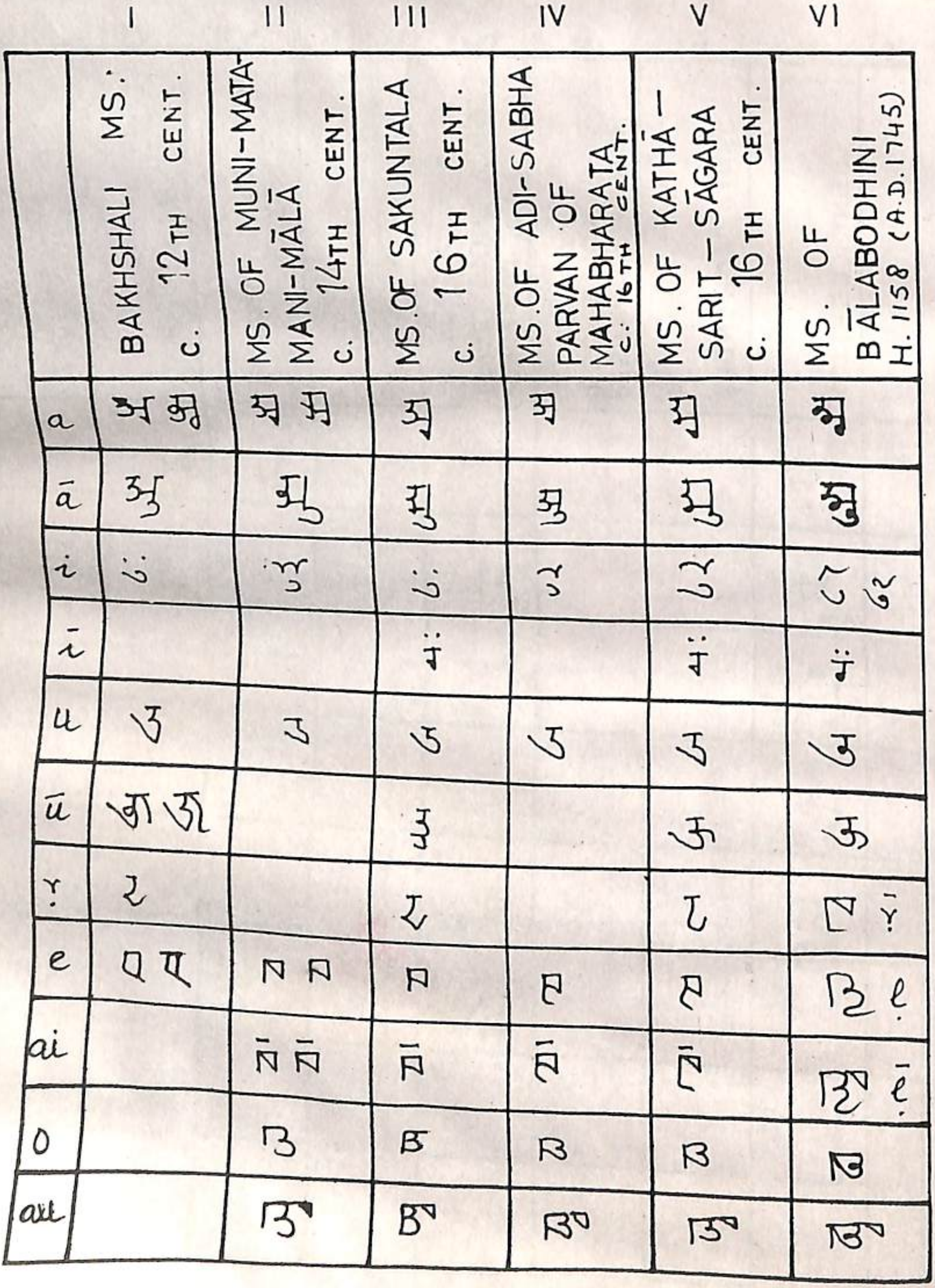


TABLE NO. 5B

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET IN MANUSCRIPTS

12th – 16th CENTURIES

CONSONANTS

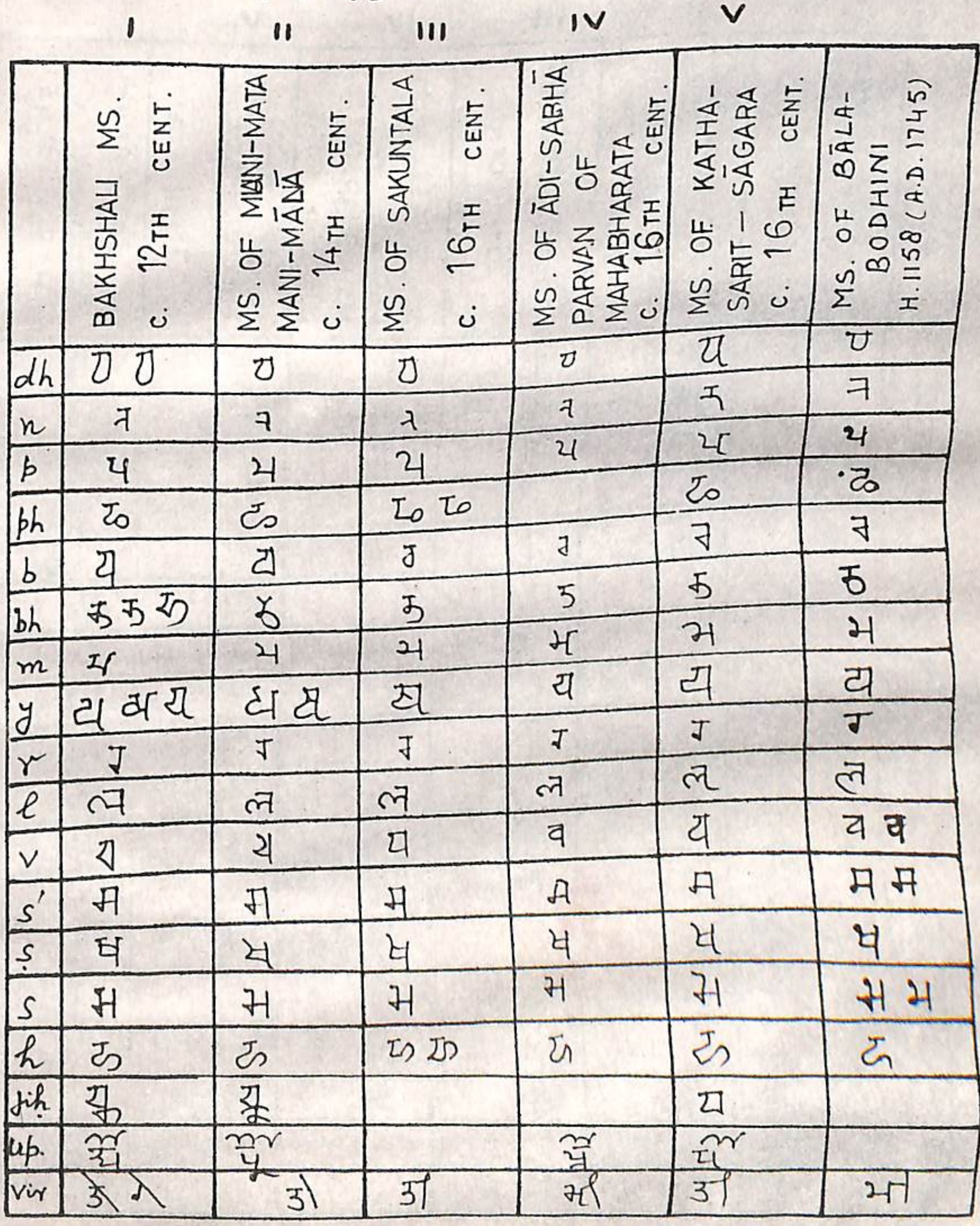


TABLE NO. 5 B CONTD.

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET IN MANUSCRIPTS

12th – 16th CENTURIES

CONSONANTS

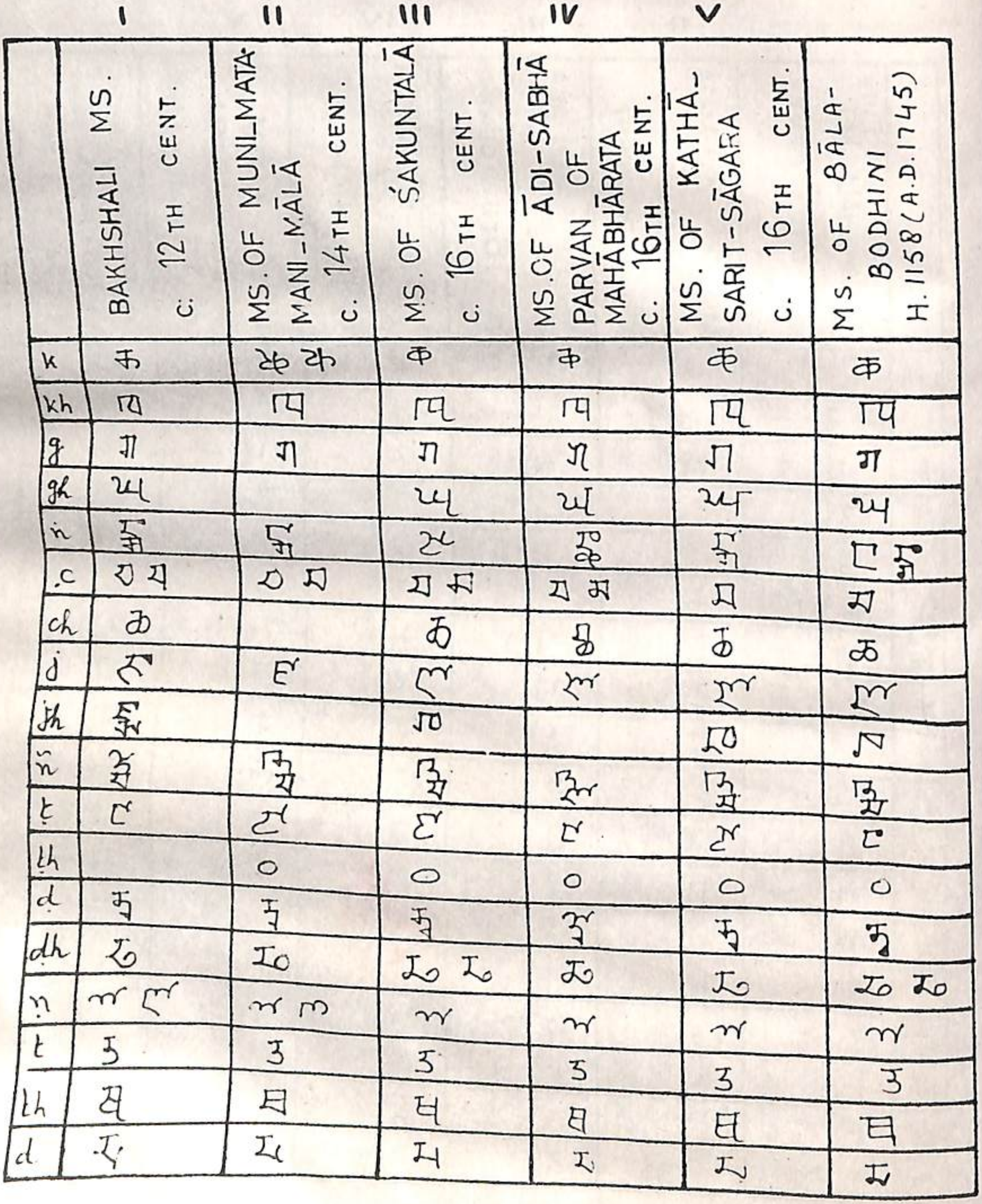


TABLE NO. 5C

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET IN MANUSCRIPTS

12TH 16TH CENTURY

MEDIAL VOWELS

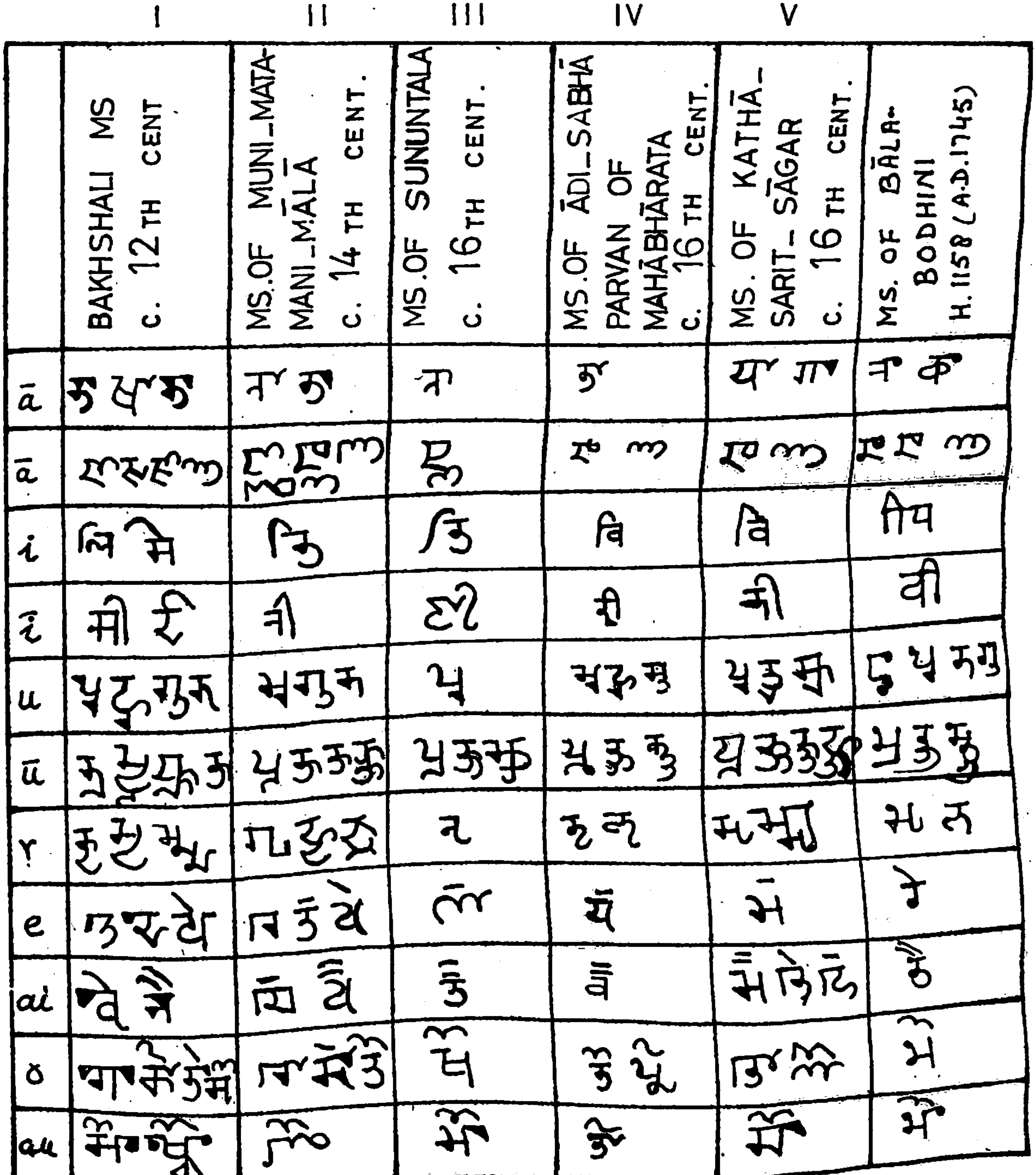


TABLE NO. 5D

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET IN MANUSCRIPTS

LIGATURES

	I	II	III	IV	V	
	BAKHSHALI MS. c 12TH CENT.	MS. OF MUNI-MATA-MANI-MĀLĀ c. 14TH CENTURY	MS. OF ŚĀKUNTALĀ c. 16TH CENTURY	MS. OF ADI-SABHA PARVANA OF MAHABHARATA c. 16TH CENTURY	MS. OF KATHA-SARIT-SAGARA. c. 16TH CENTURY	MS. OF BĀLA-BODHINI H. 1158 (A.D. 1745)
sṭ ṣṭh	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
sth	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
rth	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
jñ	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
	rm rn ry ru	ry rn rgh	rm ry	rm rv ry rj		[illegible]
					rv rgh rn	ru ry rn
		kṣ	nkṣ	kṣ	kṣ	kṣ kū
		tn				
						tra br
				cchru krū	śru	krū

TABLE NO. 6A

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET

VARIATIONS IN FORMS IN THE INSCRIPTIONS & THE MANUSCRIPTS

12 TH CENTURY

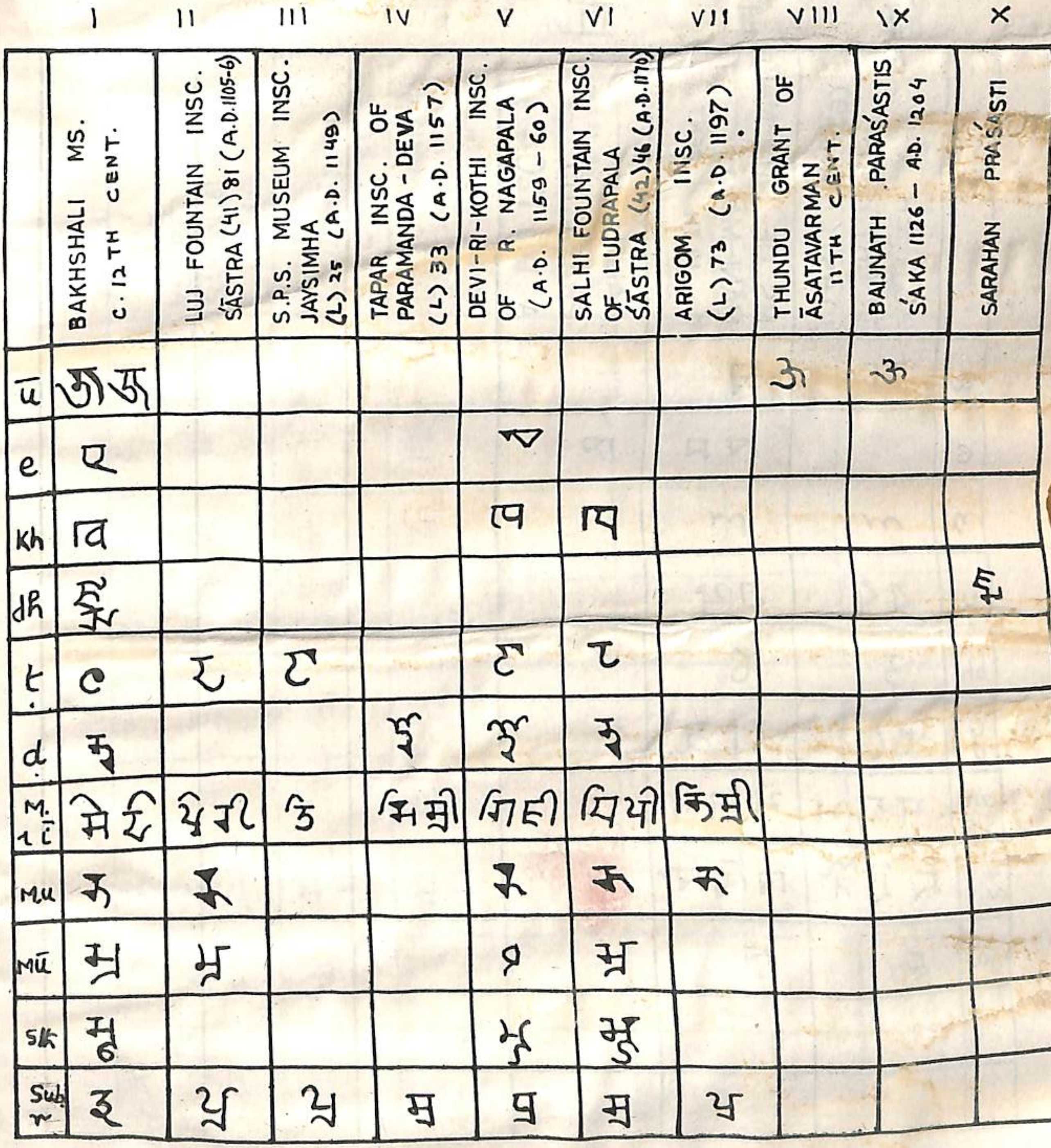


TABLE NO. 6 B

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET

VARIATIONS IN FORMS IN THE INSCRIPTIONS & MANUSCRIPTS

14 TH CENTURY

	I	II	III			
	KOTIHER INSCRIPTIONS, (L) 45 (A.D. 1369)	MS. OF MUNI-MATA-MANI-MĀLĀ C. 14 TH CENT.	BAIJNATH PRAŚASTIS A.D. 1204			
a						
e						
ṛ						
u						
bh						
y						
m ś s						
ṃ ē ai ō						
jā						

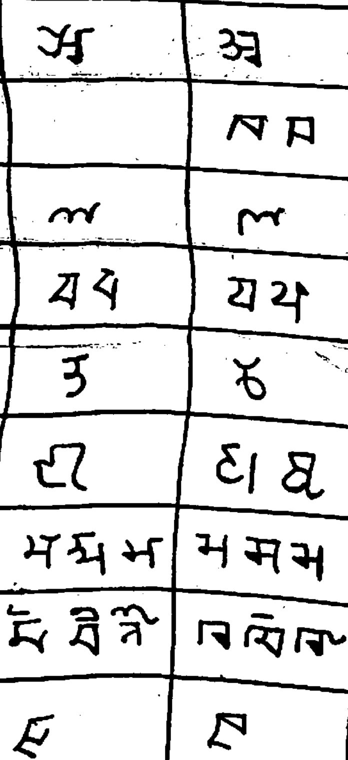


TABLE NO. 6C

THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET

VARIATIONS IN THE FORMS IN THE INSC. & MANUSC.

16 TH CENTURY

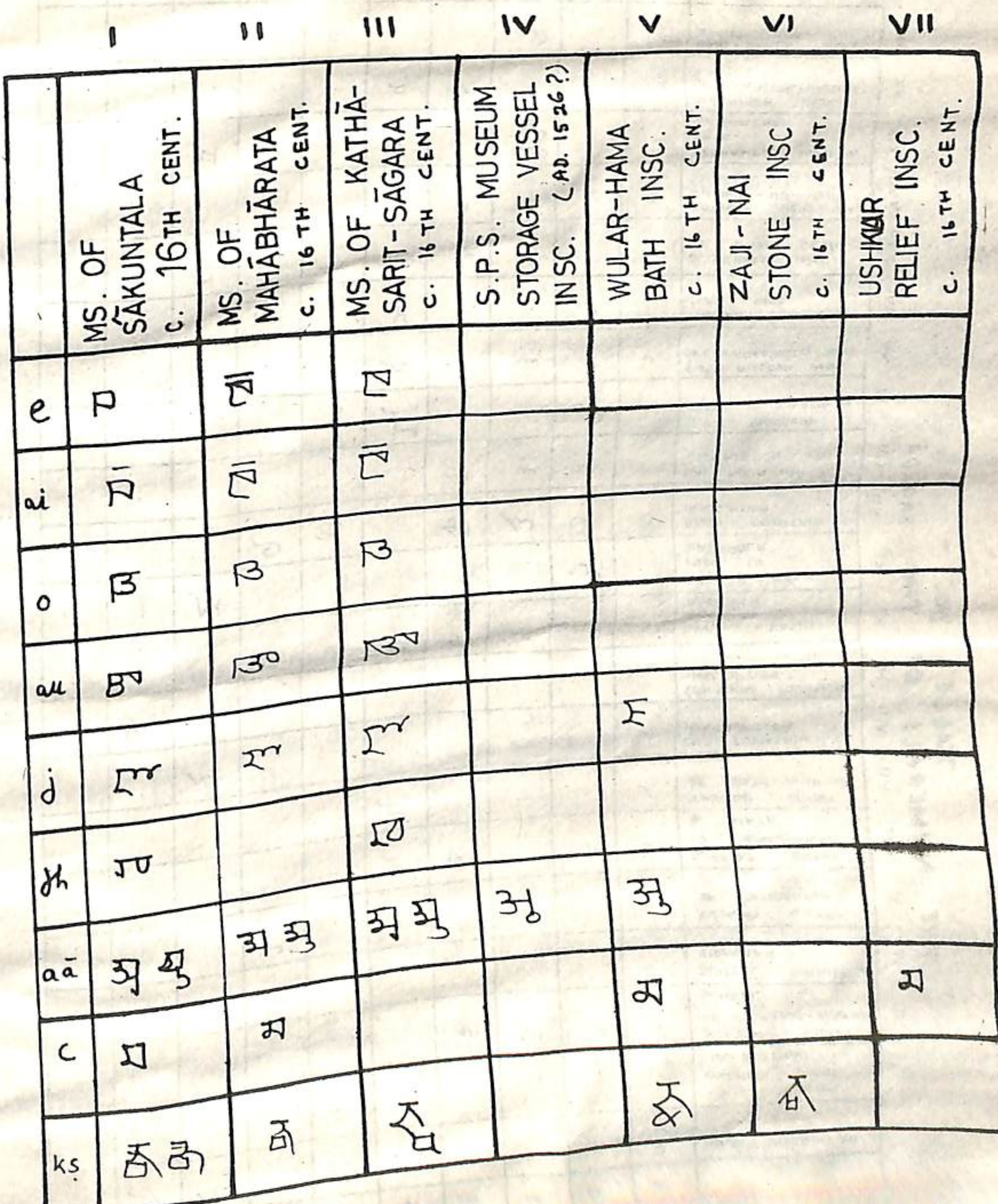
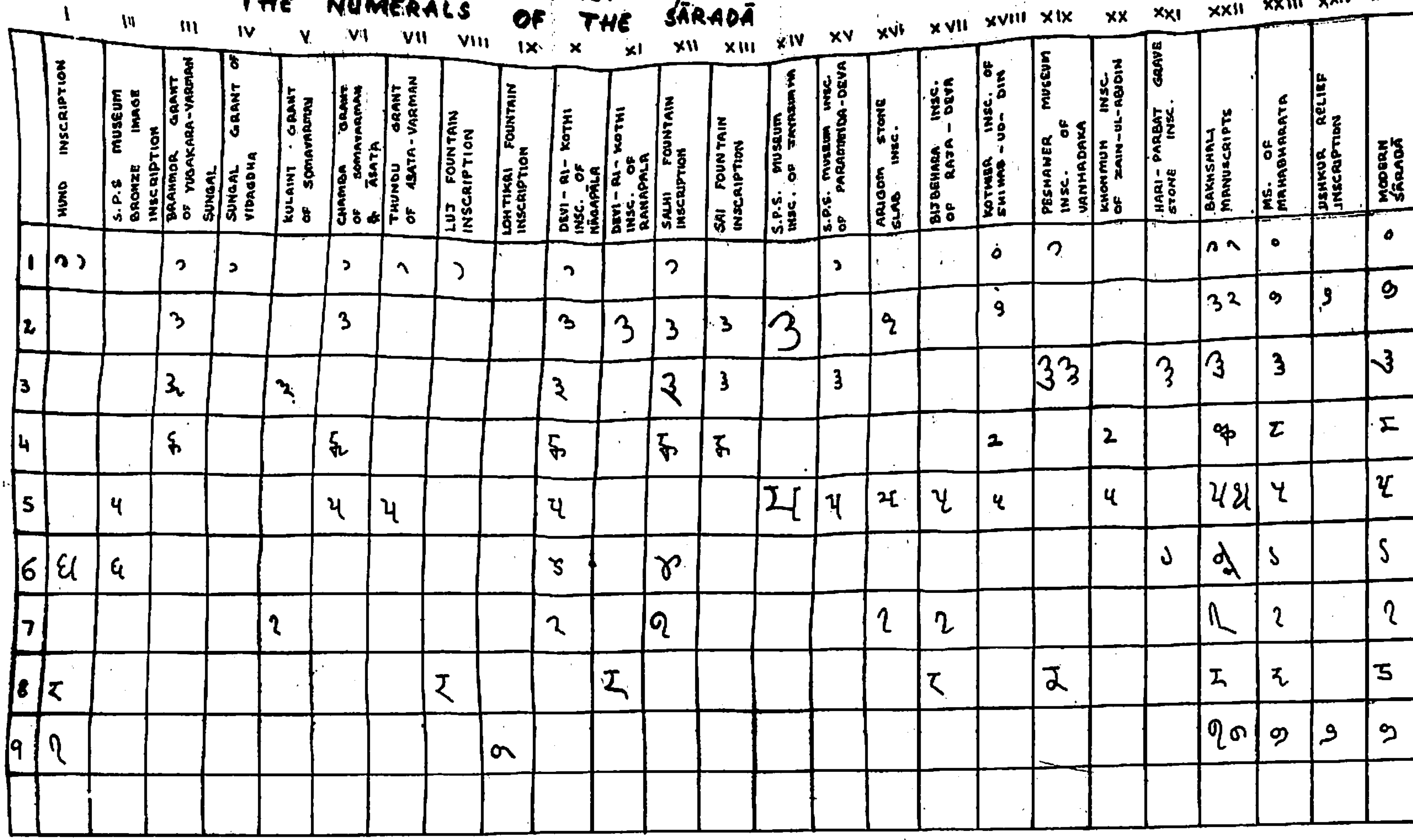


TABLE NO. 7

THE NUMERALS OF THE ŚĀRADĀ



CHAPTER VII

THE NUMERALS OF THE ŚĀRADĀ ALPHABET

In the Śāradā inscriptions, numerals are generally used for recording the dates.[1] In the copper plate grants of Chamba, however, numerals have also been used for denoting the amount of the donated pieces of land.[2] In the manuscripts numerals are generally used for recording the number of leaves or folios, chapters or cantos. In the Bakhshali manuscript the numerals have been used for arithmetical notation.

In general, our records employ the system of decimal numeration. In an image inscription from Chamba, now preserved in the National Museum, New Delhi and in the Peshawar Museum inscription of Laukika 538,[3] the numeral signs have also been expressed by the words. The signs of the figures are fairly uniform on the whole, though variations in certain cases are also observable. We give below a brief description of each figure. The figures are illustrated in the accompanying Table No. 7.

1. The figure 1 is represented mostly by semi or complete circle except in the Kotihar inscription (Col. XVIII) where the sign is

1. Occasionally, the numerical figures are also used for denoting the verse numbers as for e.g., in the Devi-ri-Kothi inscription of Nāgapāla. *Antiquities*, I, p. 212 and in the Kotihar, now S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar, inscription.
2. *Cf.*, Chamba copper plate grant of Somavarman and Āsaṭa, *Antiquities*, I, p. 193.
3. *EI*, X, pp. 79 f. and plate.

N.B. The reference of the inscriptions and the manuscripts quoted above have already been given above several times and the same may be seen from there.

represented by a small circle. In the modern Śāradā, the figure is exclusively represented by the latter sign. In the Bakhshali Manuscript (Col. XXII) the figure is sometimes also expressed especially in fractions, by a curve similar to that of initial *i*.

2. The sign for the figure 2 generally consists of two curves placed one below the other and open to the right. An advanced form is, however, noticed in the Kotihar inscription of Shihab-ud-Din (Col. XVIII) and in the Śāradā birch bark manuscript of the *Mahābhārata* (Col. XXIII) where the sign has been formed like the circular figure 1 with the addition of a tail below. The same sign is used in modern Śāradā (see Col. XXV).

3. The figure 3 is formed like the figure 2 with the addition of a small tail or a curve below the second curve. In modern Śāradā, the third curve is drawn further towards the left.

4. The figure 4 occurs in our records in 3 distinct forms. The one that is found in the copper plate, inscription of Vidagha (see Col. IV) resembles the Śāradā ligature *tka*. The second which is most common among the three, looks like the ligature *ṅka*. The third which is found in the Kotihar inscription and Khonamukh stone inscription of Zain-ul-Abidin (see Col. XX) and in the manuscript of the *Mahābhārata* (Col. XXIII) and which is more commonly used in modern Śāradā is developed from the second with omission of the subscribed *k*. An uncommon looped form is used in the Bakhshali Manuscript (see Col. XXII). Kaye's statement that the sign closely resembles that used in the Sungal grant of Vidagha (see Col. IV) is far from fact.

5. The symbol for the figure 5 resembles the Śāradā letter *p* with the right hand vertical lengthened downwords and turned towards the left. Its shape is generally consistent throughout.

6. The figure 6 shows distinct variations in shape. In the Hund inscription (Col. I) and the S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar bronze image inscription (Col. II), its form agrees with Nāgarī figure 6. In the Devi-ri-Kothi inscription of Nāgapāla (Col. II) it is represented by a S like form with a stroke attached to it near the top on the left side. In the Salhi fountain inscription (Col. XII) it shows a peculiar looped form.

In the Bakhshali Manuscript it resembles the final *m*. In the Hariparbat inscription (Col. XXI) its form is not unlike the cursive *I* of ancient Brāhmī. The forms of the manuscript of the *Mahābhārata* (Col. XXIII) agrees closely but is narrower in shape. The sign used in the modern Śāradā is a development of the sign used in the Hariparbat inscription with the upper stroke turned sharply round towards the right. The sign in this respect closely resembles that for the figure 7 of the Devanāgarī.

7. The sign for the figure 7 closely agrees with that used in the Nāgarī to denote the figure 1. Its form remains generally consistent throughout.

8. The symbol for the figure 8 may be described as the Śāradā *ṅ* without the wedge at the right top end and with the base stroke slanting downwards. In the modern Śāradā, the base stroke is converted into a curve turning sharply towards the left. A peculiar cursive form occurs in the Peshawar Museum inscription (see Col. XIX) where the figure shows a big circular loop at the lower end.

9. The sign for the figure 9 in the Hund inscription (see Col. I) does not materially differ from that of the figure 7 noted above. The signs with a loop on the left used in the Loh-Tikri inscription (Col. IX) and the Bakhshali Manuscript (see Col. XXII) appear to be developed from this sign. The left hand loop is evidently caused by the contact of the lower end of the left hand curve with the right hand downstroke. Further development is illustrated by the sign used in the Ushkur relief inscription (Col. XXIV) where the right hand downstroke is converted into a curve turned sharply towards the left. The same sign is used in the modern Śāradā.

10. Zero is rendered throughout by a dot.

As pointed out above, the numerical sign in the National Museum (New Delhi) image inscription and the Peshawar Museum inscription have also been expressed in words. Thus in the former, the date, the year 53 has been expressed by words *Śara* (standing for 5) and *guṇa* (standing for three). In the latter inscription the figures of the date 538 have been expressed by *Śara* (5) and hundred augmented by *gaja* (8) and thirty.

SECTION II

ŚĀRADĀ INSCRIPTIONS OF KASHMIR, JAMMU & LADAKH

CHAPTER VIII

ŚĀRADĀ INSCRIPTIONS OF KASHMIR

Kalhaṇa[1] in his *Rājataraṅginī* explicitly states that he studied all types of inscription as, for example, those recording consecration of temples and religious institution, those registering the grant of lands by former kings and the euologies or laudatory inscriptions for writing his chronicle and was thus able to "overcome the trouble arising from many errors". Again the famous Chinese traveller Hiuen-Tsang records that the canonical texts fixed by the Fourth Council were engraved on sheets of paper and the same were deposited by the great Kuṣāṇa ruler Kaṇiṣka beneath a *stupa* erected by him at Kundalavana in the valley. However, only a very small number of the old inscriptions has survived to this day and most of these are very brief and sketchy in character and are generally only partly preserved. They, as such, do not furnish any detailed information about the history and culture of Kashmir. Their interest however, lies in the fact that they contain names of several rulers of Kashmir and are generally dated and thus help us to verify the correctness of Kalhaṇa's chronology. It is surprising that not a single copper plate inscription recording grant of land by the rulers of Kashmir has come to light so far. The copper plate inscriptions are regarded as mines of historical information, which fact is amply demonstrated by the copper plate inscriptions of the neighbouring old hill State of Chamba which have provided a solid base for the reconstruction of the political and cultural history of this ancient hill State from 9th century to the last known king in an almost continuous strain. The absolute absence of copper plate charters in the valley cannot be severely felt by any student of

1. *RT*, 7.15.

Kashmir history. The Buddhist copper plates referred to by Hiuen Tsang still lie buried underground at some unknown place in the valley.

We now describe below the Śāradā inscriptions that have come to light so far in Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh. We shall begin with the inscriptions which are of definite date and which belong to the reigns of important rulers of Kashmir and are, as such, very important from historical and chronological point of view. Next we shall deal with the records which are either very fragmentary or of doubtful dates and lastly give a brief account of the inscriptions which have been referred to by several earlier scholars but which are now either lost or completely defaced or inaccessible or lying in the museum's abroad.

No. 1. S.P.S. MUSEUM, SRINAGAR BUDDHIST IMAGE INSCRIPTION OF THE REIGN OF QUEEN DIDDĀ, (LAUKIKA) YEAR 65, 989 A.D.

The inscription is incised on three sides of the pedestal of a bronze statuette of the Bodhisattva Padmapāṇi. The original find spot of the image is unknown and it is now preserved in the S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar. The back side of the pedestal is broken and lost leading to the loss of a part of the inscription. The image has been described in detail by Shri R.C. Kak in the *Handbook of Archaeological and Numismatic sections of the Sri Pratap Singh Museum, Srinagar*, pp. 68, 70-71, by M. Lanius in *A Kashmiri Bodhisattva Related to the queen Diddā Bronze, Archives of Asian Art*, Vol. XXII and by Pratapaditya Pal in *Bronzes of Kashmir*, p. 146 and plate. The inscription, however, has not been edited so far.

The epigraph records the consecration of a religious gift (*deya dharma*) consisting of the bronze statuette of Bodhisattva Padmapāṇi by Rājānaka Bhīmaṭa, a Buddhist devotee (*upāsaka*) and son of Cāvaṭa and by the four brothers (*bhrātṛi-catuṣṭava*) of Gaṅgā Devi described as divine mother, (*amara-mātā*). The inscription is dated in the year 65, in the reign of Queen Diddā on the 15th lunar day of the bright half of the month of *Śrāvaṇa*. The year 65 referred to the Laukika era corresponds to 989 A.D. which falls well within the reign of the queen.

The characters are Śāradā. The chief palaeographic peculiarities have already been discussed above. The language is incorrect Sanskrit. As regards orthography we find *ddeva* for *deva*, *ttu* for *tu*. The reduplication seems to be due to the Prakrit influence. The inscription contains the numeral figures 1, 5, and 6 in the date portion.

The inscription is important in more than one respect. It mentions Queen Diddā (980/1-1003 A.D.) with the masculine epithet, of *deva* instead of *devī*. In another inscription of her reign to be described below she is again mentioned with the masculine epithet of *Rājan*. These epithets for the queen sound rather queer but they would show how she was looked upon by people of her times more as a powerful king than as a mere queen apparently because of her

energy, political acumen and essentially masculine traits of character which enabled her to rule over Kashmir with firmness for more than half a century in very troubled times. For the history of Buddhism in Kashmir our inscription is particularly important as it furnishes evidence of the continued popularity of Mahāyāna and the worship of the Bodhisattvas in the valley even in the 10th century A.D.

It is not known when Mahāyāna, which first introduced the concept of Bodhisattva in the Buddhist faith, first gained a footing in Kashmir. Its existence in the periods preceding our record is, however, proved by the discovery of a large number of Bodhisattva images from Pāraspor (ancient Parihāsapura)[1] and Pandrethan[2] and by the testimony of Hiuen-Tsang[3] who noticed in the capital a monastery which was centre of the Mahāyāna philosophy and saw a huge image of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara devoutly worshipped by the earnest believers.

The predominant Brahmanic faith appears to have exercised great influence on the contemporary Buddhist religion. An evidence to this effect is furnished by our image which represents the Bodhisattva as wearing a sacred thread in the fashion of the Brahmans.

Text[4]

Left side : ओं[5] सं ६५ श्रा शु २५ श्रा प्र[6] दिद्दाद्दे (दे) व राज्ये ॥ देय-

Front side : धर्मोयं राजानक-उपासक-भीमट-चावट-पुत्रस्य[7] तथा श्र-

Righ side : मर माता गंग़ादेव्या भ्रातृचन्तु (तु) ष्टयस्य सकल स- -

1. Kak, *Ancient Monuments*, pp. 146-49.
2. Kak, *Handbook*, pp. 27-38.
3. Watters, *On Yuan Chwang*, I, p. 283.
4. From the original.
5. Expressed by a symbol.
6. Perhaps an abbreviation of *Pravardhamāna*.
7. The proposed rendering of this compound is not beyond doubt.

Translation

In the (Laukika year 41) 65, on the 15th lunar day of the bright fortnight of *Śrāvaṇa* in the prosperous and illustrious (?) reign of Queen Diddā this religious gift was consecrated (for earning religious merit) by (lit. of) Rājānaka Bhima, a devotee and son of Cāvaṭa and by four brothers (?) of Gangā-devī, the divine mother.

No. 2. SRINAGER INSCRIPTION OF THE REIGN OF QUEEN DIDDĀ, (LAUKIKA) YEAR 68, 992 A.D.

The inscription is engraved on a stone slab (10″×8½″) which was discovered in a private house in Srinagar and was later presented by Dr. G.W. Leitner to the Lahore Museum where it is now preserved. It has been mentioned by J.Ph. Vogel in his *Antiquities of Chamba State*, Part I, p. 258, Appendix and described by Rai Bahadur Daya Ram Sahni, *Annual Progress Report*, Archaeological Survey of India for 1918-19, p. 20 and Appendix C, No. 9 and subsequently edited by Kedar Nath Shastri in the *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXVII, pp. 153 ff.

The record consists of ten lines comprising three verses, two of which are almost complete while the third is only partly preserved owing to the peeling off the bottom portions of the slab. The average size of the letters is about ½″ by ¾″. The characters are Śāradā. The palaeographic features of the record have already been discussed.

The inscription appears to be dedicatory in character but the genealogy of the donor and the dedicatory portion recording the purpose of the inscription are lost. It mentions certain Dharmāṇka who gladdened and honoured his mother by dedicating some religious institution or charitable work in her honour.

The inscription is dated in the bright fortnight of the month of *Śucī* in the year 68 in the reign of Queen Diddā. The year 68 when referred to the Laukika era corresponds to 992 A.D. which falls well within the reign of the queen.

As pointed out above, in this record 1too Queen Diddā (980/1-1003 A.D.) is mentioned with the masculine epithet *rājan* instead of more appropriate *rājñī*.

The record contains references to the Brahmanical deities like Gauri, Kārttikeya, Gaṇapati, Āditya, Aditi, Kriṣṇa, etc., and, as such, attests to the flourishing state of Brahmanical cult in the valley in the 10th century. The other record of Queen Didda's reign described above furnishes evidence of the flourishing condition of Buddhism in

the valley abut the same time. The two inscriptions, thus, present a glaring picture of the religious tolerance as practised in ancient Kashmir.

Text

1. व्यवहिततर देशं (शेष) धेनूपकार (प्रव) प (जन)-
2. क भावस्वास्पदं (सद्ग) तस्य । अविकल फलभाजां (भा)
3. जनं पौरुभाषां समजनि मदनांङ्क पुत्ररत्नं च
4. (य) स्याः ॥ [१*] गौरी शक्ति धरो यक्ष गणपतिर्देवीं यथा
5. (जा) ह्नवोम्भास्वाप्यदितिं यक्ष नरकभिद्देवो यथा
6. (देव) कीं (म्) उत्खावातैस्त्रिदशा धिनाथजनता सन्तोष स
7. (म्पा) दकैर्यमानन्दयतिस्म धर्मपरमो धर्मांङ्कना-
8. (मा) सुतः ।। [२*] अष्टाषष्टितमांश धाम (नि) शू (चे)
9. (मार्सस्य) पक्षे सिते दिद्दानाम्नि राज्ञि भाव
10. ᴗᴗ--(द्रा) न्तराभ्यासजः भक्त्या यां श्रितवांशिच

-ᴗᴗᴗ---ᴗ--ᴗ- [॥३॥*]

Translation

Verse 1— (The Lady) who gave birth to a jewel like son, lovely as Kāmadeva, who, with well manifested fatherly love was a great benefactor of all the cows (coming from) far of lands (and who was) an abode of manly acts which bear consummate fruit.

Verse 2— Just as the lance bearer god (Kārttikeya) gladdened Gaurī Gaṇpati the divine Jāhnavi, Āditya Aditi, Lord Kriṣṇa Devaki, even so, her son, Dharmāṇka by name, intent upon performing pious acts gladdened her by (charitable) diggings (of wells, tanks, etc.) which brought joy to the gods and the men alike.

Verse 3— (In the year) sixty eight, in the bright fortnight of (the month of) Jyeṣṭha when king (queen) Diddā (was ruling), (Dharmāṇka) honoured her mother by dedicating some charitable work to perpetuate her memory.

No. 3. THE S.P.S. MUSEUM, SRINAGAR STONE SLAB INSCRIPTION OF THE REIGN OF JAYASIMHA (LAUKIKA) YEAR 25, 1149 A.D.

The inscription is engraved on a rectangular stone slab measuring 2'7" in length 1'4" in width and 3" in thickness. It was found in the vicinity of Ferozpur Nallah near Baramulla in the course of the dredging operations in the river Jhelum. The record has not been edited so far. It is now preserved in the S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar.

The inscription consists of three lines and records the re-consecration of something, not mentioned in the inscription by some Bhaṭṭa Govinda. The name of the donor's father is also mentioned but the lettering here is blurred and the name not distinctly visible. The record is dated in *Samvat* 25, on the 12th lunar day of the bright fortnight of the month of *Chaitra* in the reign of king Jayasimhadeva. Jayasimha is undoubtedly the famous Kashmir ruler of this name who ruled from 1128 A.D. to 1155 A.D. The year 25 referred to the Laukika era corresponds to 1149 A.D.

Text

1. ओं[2] सं २५ चैत्र शु ति द्वादश्यां
2. जयसिंह देवराज्य (ज्ये) भट्ट गोविन्द देन
3. वामेन (?) पुत्रेन(ण) पुनः प्रकाशितम्

Translation

In the year 25, on the 12th lunar day of the bright half of *Chaitra* in the reign of king Jayasimha (this image) was re-consecrated by Bhaṭṭa Govinda, son of Vāma (?).

1. From the original and the photograph.
2. Expressed by a symbol.

No. 4. TAPAR STONE INSCRIPTION OF THE REIGN OF PARAMĀṆḌADEVA (LAUKIKA) YEAR 33, 1157 A.D.

The village of Tapar situated at a distance of 47 km to the south-west of Srinagar on Baramulla road, 74° 34′ long. 34° 12′ lat. in district Baramulla, represents the ancient city of Pratāpapura which was founded by king Pratāpāditya Durlabhaka probably in the second half of the seventh century.[1] Excavations at this site have yielded remains of old temples and one of these includes a huge and long stone lintel measuring 3′3½″ in length, 1′6″ in width and 10¾″ in thickness. It bears an inscription in one line, incised almost all over the front surface. The inscription is now preserved in the S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar.

The characters are Śāradā. The chief palaeographic peculiarities worth noticing are: the quadrangular *c*, the chief peculiarity of later Śāradā and the developed form of cerebral *ṇa* in *Brahmaṇa* which occurs regularly in the Śāradā after the 12th century. The numerical signs mentioned in the date portion are 1, 3, 5.

The inscription records the consecration of something not recorded in the inscription but probably of a temple of which the huge inscribed lintel formed a part. The donor was Gagga, son of Jagarāja, an *ācārya* or teacher and a *Bhāgavata* or devotee of Viṣṇu.

The record is dated in the year 33, on the 15th lunar day of the bright fortnight of *Āṣāḍha* in the reign of the illustrious Paramāṇḍadeva. The chief interest of the record is the mention of Paramāṇḍadeva as the ruling prince.

The king of this name, however, does not figure in the known list of the Kashmir rulers. The identification of Paramāṇḍadeva, as such, presents some difficulty. Since the characters of this inscription agree with those of the Arigom stone slab inscription of the year 1197 A.D.[2] we may assign the inscription to the 12th century and refer the year 33 to the Laukika era corresponding to 1157 A.D. According

1. *RT*, IV. 10.
2. See No. 6 *infra*.

to Jonarāja[3] the king ruling this time in Kashmir was Paramāṇnka, the son and successor of Jayasimha. It seems that Paramāṇḍadeva of our inscription is the same as Paramāṇuka of Jonarāja. Kalhaṇa[4] mentions Paramāṇḍi as a son of Jayasimha and it would seem that Paramāṇḍi, Paramāṇḍadeva and Paramāṇuka signify the same person.

Text[5]

ओं[6] सं ३३ आषाढ़ शूति २५ श्री परमाण्डदेवराज्ये ब्रह्मणभगवताचार्य जगराजस्य स्वपुत्रधागेन प्रतिपादितम् ।

Translation

In the year 33, on the 15th lunar day of the bright half of *Āṣāḍha* in the reign of the illustrious Paramāṇḍadeva (something) was installed by Ghagga the noble son of Jagarajā, a Brahman, a teacher and a devotee of Viṣṇu.

3. *Dvitīya Rājatarangiṇī*, 39.
4. *RT*, VIII, 1608.
5. From the original.
6. Expressed by a symbol.

No. 5. VEJIBROR (BIJBIHARA) STONE INSCRIPTION OF THE REIGN OF YASKARADEVA, (LAUKIKA) YEAR 53, 1177 A.D.

The town of Vejibror has yielded another inscription incised on a stone round at the bottom and flat at the top, which originally formed part of some Hindu shrine and is now built into an outer wall of a mosque attached to the Ziarat of Nasib-u-din Auliya in the same locality. It was first discovered by Sir John Marshall during his tour of the valley and has been briefly described by him in his *Note on the Archaeological Works in Kashmir*, p. 22.

The inscription consists of five short lines; the last line containing only four letters. The characters are Śāradā. The peculiarities worthy to note are the developed form of *ḍha* in *Chudha l.* 2 with a well developed circle on the right, of *ṇa* in *Paṇḍita l.* 4 and *ṭṭa* in *Bhaṭṭa l.* 4. The numerical figures given in the date portion in the beginning are, 1, 3, 5 and zero. The language is incorrect Sanskrit.

The inscription records the consecration by Pandita Bhaṭṭa Manohara of something not recorded in the inscription but presumably of some religious institution of which the inscribed stone formed a part. The inscription contains names of some individual in second and third lines, viz., Bhālakṣaka, his wife Chuḍhā, his son Āhala, his wife Lakṣā and mother Bhojā. It is not clear in what connection they are mentioned in the record and what relations did they bear with the donor mentioned in the 4th line. It may be that they were the kinsmen of the donor and with him took part in the consecration.

The epigraph is dated in the year 53, on the 10th lunar day of the bright half of Śrāvaṇa in the reign of Yaskaradeva. The mention of Yaskaradeva as the ruling king presents some difficulty as the king of this name is not traceable in the list of the kings of Kashmir. He could be identified with king Yasaskaradeva who was elected king of Kashmir in 938 A.D. and ruled only for nine years upto 948 A.D.[1] But the year 53 mentioned in the

1. *RT*, v. 477.

epigraph does not all fall within the reign of the king if referred either to the Laukika or the Śaka era. The characters of the inscription closely resemble those of the Śāradā epigraphic records of the 12th century. It may, as such, be assigned on palaeographic grounds to the 12th century A.D. The year 53 if referred to the Laukika era would correspond to 1178 A.D., that is, about the time when according to Jonarāja[2] Jassaka as ascended the throne of Kashmir. It is tempting to identify Yaskaradeva of our inscription with Jassaka of Jonarāja since Jassaka seems to be the corruption of Yaskara or more correctly Yasaskara.

Text

1. श्रों सं ५३ श्रावण शुति २० यस्करदेवराज्ये
2. भालक्षक एतत (द्) भार्या छुढा तस्य पुत्र श्राह-
3. ल एतत (द्) भार्या लक्षा तथा मातु (ता) भोजा
4. पण्डित्त भट्ट मनोहर (रे) न (ण) प्रतिपा-
5. दितम् ।

Translation

Om. In the year 53, on the 10th Lunar day of the bright half of Śrāvaṇa in the reign of Yaskaradeva. (There was one) Bhālakṣaka. His wife (was) Chuḍhā. His son was Āhala. His (Ahala's) wife was Lakṣā and mother Bhojā. Consecrated by Paṇḍita Bhaṭṭa Manohara.

2. *Dvitīya Rājataraṅgiṇī*. Among the sons of king Jayasimha, Kalhaṇa (*op. cit*, viii. 3334) mentions one with the name Yasaskara. The Yaskaradeva of our inscription could be identified with Yasarkara of Kalhaṇa but the latter does not appear to have ascended the throne of Kashmir. He is not mentioned by Jonarāja, nor is he known from any other source to have ruled Kashmir.

No. 6. ARIGOM STONE SLAB INSCRIPTION OF THE (LAUKIKA) YEAR, 73, 1197 A.D.

Arigom is a village in the Nagam pargana in district Badgam, 74° 45′ long., 33° 56′ lat. situated 15 km to the south west of Srinagar. It represents the ancient *Hādīgrāma* where according to Kalhaṇa[1] an *agrahāra* was established by king Gopāditya of Kashmir. It was the site of several fights among the rival pretenders to the throne of Kashmir in the 12th century. Here an inscription was found in the house of a Brahmana by Sten Konow during his tour of the valley in 1908-9. It was subsequently edited by him in the *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. IX, pp. 300-302 and plate. The epigraph is now preserved in the S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar.

The inscription is incised on the front side of a well polished square block of greyish stone measuring 20″×20¾″×4″, on the top of which is a mystic Buddhist symbol consisting of a sligtly convex circular disc enclosed within a square. The inscribed surface measures 17½″×3″ and the average height of the letters is ¾″. The inscription consists of five lines. The left hand upper and right hand lower corners of the stone are broken leading to the loss of a few letters in lines 1, 2 and 4. The characters are Śāradā, the palaeographic features of which have already been noted above. The language is Sanskrit.

The inscription begins with an invocation to Lord Avalokitesvara in prose. The date given in the line 5 is also in prose. The rest is in verse and there are two verses one in *Śloka* and the other in *Śārdūlavikrīḍita* metres.

The epigraph informs us that a certain Vaidya (physician) Ullhadeva by name, had built in the past a *vihāra* (shrine) of wood to house an image of Avalokiteśvara near the vicinity of Gangeśvara temple. This having been burnt in course of time by king Simha, some Rāmadeva, a devotee of the Bodhisatva Avalokiteśvara and son of Kulladeva built a shrine of burnt bricks to replace the burnt wooden structure.

1. *RT*, 340.

The inscription is dated in the year 73 on the 5th lunar day of the month of *Mārgaśīrṣa.* The year 73 referred to the Laukika era corresponds to 1197 A.D. and the month and the lunar day correspond according to the calculations of Sten Konow to 16th November.

The mention of king Simha is of interest as he appears to be identical with king Jayasimha (1128-1155 A.D.) during whose reign according to Kalhaṇa[2] Arigom was burnt by Jayasimha's minister Suffi. It appears that the shrine referred to in the inscription was burnt along with the village itself.

For the history of religion in Kashmir this record is particularly important as it furnishes evidence of the continued flourishing state of Buddhism in the valley even as late as the end of the 12th century. From this inscription as also from that of the reign of Queen Diddā discused above and of Rājadeva to be described below, we learn that the Mahāyāna school of Buddhism which first introduced the concept of Bodhisatva in the Buddhist faith, had great following in the valley in the 10th and the subsequent centuries and the worship of the Bodhisatvas was prevalent. This is particularly significant since Kashmir had remained for long a great strong hold of the Sarvāstivādins and the Vaibhāṣikas. In this record we again come across a glaring picture of religious tolerance practised in ancient Kashmir, for, we are told that the shrine of Avalokiteśvara was built first in the vicinity of the Śiva temple of Gaṅgeśvara which would show that the sacred shrines of different religious sects flourished side by side in ancient Kashmir.

Again the epigraph contains an interesting information about the nature of the building material used in the valley in the 12th century. We learn that both wood and burnt bricks were used for architectural purposes, for it is stated in the inscription that a shrine of burnt bricks was constructed by some Rāmadeva to replace the one of wood built by Ullhadeva and burnt down by king Simha *i.e.*, Jayasimha.

2. *Ibid.*, viii, 1586.

Text

1……पु त्रै नमो भगवते आर्यावलोकितेश्वराय ।। त्रैलोक्यालोकभूताय लोका-
2. (ल) - (स) भवश्छि दे (*) जगदानन्दचन्द्रायलोकनाथाय ते तम: प्राग्गङ्गेश्वर सन्नि)
3. वौ सुमति मान्वैधोल्लह देवाभियश्च वक्रे (क्रे) दारूमयं विहारममलं श्री लोक नाथास्पदम्
[*१*] तस्मि [न्सि]
4. ह नृपेण कालवशतो दग्धेथ पक्वेष्टिका श्रेष्ठं तद्रत कुल्लदेवतनयो-मुं राम देवो
(व्यधात् ।।) [२*]
5. सं ७३ मार्ग शुति ५

Translation

……Salutation to the exalted noble Avalokiteśvara.

Verse 1. Salutation to you, the Lord of the world, who has become a light to the three worlds, who is a moon of delight to the world, who cuts as under the bonds of the world.

Verse 2. In the past, a Vaidya Ullhadeva by name, made a spotless shrine of wood, an abode for the lord of the world, in the vicinity of the Gaṅgeśvara temple. When this was burnt by king Simha through the will of fate, Rāmadeva, the son of Kulladeva who was devoted to him (*i.e.* Avalokiteśvara), made another excellent shrine of burnt bricks.

Sam. 73, the 5th day of the bright half of *Mārga* (*Śirsa*).

No. 7. VEJIBROR (BIJBIHARA) STONE INSCRIPTION OF THE REIGN OF RĀJA DEVA, (SAKA) year 58, 1236 A.D.

The town of Vejibror of Bijbehara is the headquarter of the Tehsil of the same name in Anantnag district and is situated on the Jammu—Srinagar National High Way at a distance of 45 kms to the south-east of Srinagar 75° 9′ long. and 33° 48′ lat. It owes its ancient name to the ancient shrine of Vijyeśvara which however, has long disappeared. Kalhaṇa[1] attributes the foundation of the town to king Vijaya about whom we know nothing except the name. The history of the town goes back to the time of Aśoka who is said to have repaired the old shrine of Vijyeśvara and built two temples called after this own name as Asokeśvara.[2] It was here that the Huṇa king Mihirkula according to Kalhaṇa[3] granted a thousand *agrahāras* to Brahamanas hailing from Gandhāra. In the 12th century the town was a scene of great military activity during the civil war that broke out after the death of king Karṣa in 1101 A.D. and of Uccale in 1111 A.D.[4]

The ancient town of Vejibror has yielded a few inscriptions of which two are complete and deserving notice. The one under discussion is incised on the front side of a square stone slab with a convex top. In shape the stone closely resembles the one discovered by Sten Konow at Arigom in district Badgam referred to above and now lying in the S·P.S. Museum, Srinagar. The stone originally discovered from a private house at Bijbehara is now lying in a private house at Srinagar. The inscription is fairly well preserved and consists of three lines of uniform length in prose. The characters are Śāradā. The chief palaeographic peculiarities noticeable are the quadrangular *c* in *acārya l.* 2 with an open top, and *virāma* the stroke of which runs through the middle of the letter in *m l.* 3, instead of on the right side of the letter. As regards orthography we find *je* for *ja* in *rāje*, *l.* 1, *ka* for *ke* in *lokaśvara ll.* 2-3. The epigraph contains numeral signs for 5 4 and 6 in the date portion in the beginning.

1. *RT*, ii. 62.
2. *Ibid.*, i. 105-106.
3. *Ibid.*, i. 316-317.
4. *Ibid.*, viii. 746 sqq., 269 sqq., 1140, 1059, sqq.

The inscription records the consecration of a *maṇḍalaka* in honour of Lord Lokeśvara of Avalokiteśvara by the teacher (*acārya*) Kamalaśriya in the reign of king Rājadeva in the year 58, on the 15th lunar day of the bright half of the month of Vaiśākha, The king Rājadeva may be identified with king Rājadeva who according to Jonarāja[5] was the son and successor of Jaggadeva (1199-1213 A.D.) and who ruled over Kashmir from Laukika (42) 89 to Laukika (43) 12 or 1213 A.D. to 1236 A.D. The date to the inscription presents some difficulty. The year 58 if as usual referred to the Laukika era corresponds to 1284 A.D. which, however, does not fall within the reign of the king. The difficulty can be overcome if we refer the date to the Saka era which was also used sometimes in Kashmir. In this case the date of the inscription would correspond to Laukika (43) 12 *Vaiśākha Śu* 7 which proceeds the date of Rājadeva's death, viz, Laukika (43) 12 *Srāvaṇa śu* 11 as given by Jonarāja[6] by three months and four days.

For the study of the history of Buddhism in Kashmir the inscription is particularly important. It shows that the tantrik form of Buddhism was popular in the valley in the 13th century, for, there can be no doubt that the *maṇḍalaka* referred to in the inscription is the same as *maṇḍala* or mystical circle drawing of which along with *mudrā* of finger poses, *mantra* or recitation of mystical spells, *kriyas* or rites and *caryā* or worship of Tantrik deities, was considered means of attaining *siddhi* or spiritual perfection by the Tantrik Buddhists. The donor *ācārya* Kamalaśriya appears to have been some Tantrik teacher. The stone on which our inscription is incised bears on the top a round disc. The same disc we find on the top of the Arigom stone referred to above. It seems that this mystical disc represents the *maṇḍalaka* of our inscription the consecration of which in honour of lord Lokeśvara or Avalokiteśvara, the famous Bodhisattva and a favourite deity of Tantrik Buddhists was regarded as means of earning religious merit by the Tantrik Buddhists of Kashmir.

5. *Dvitīya Rājataraṅginī*, vv. 79-91.
6. *Ibid*., 91 *cf.* Marshall, *Note* p. 21.

Text[7]

1. ओं[8] सं ५८ वैशाख शुति ७ परमेश्वर श्री राजे (च)
2. देव राज्ये आचार्य कमल श्रियेन (ण) लोक) (के)
3. श्वर-भट्टारक-मण्डलकं प्रतिपादितम् (*)

Translation

Om. In the year 58, on the seventh lunar day of the bright half of the *Vaiśākha* in the reign of the illustrious Rājadeva a magical circle of Lord Lokeśvara (Avalokiteśvara) was instituted by the teacher Kamalaśriya.

7. From the original and the photograph.
8. Expressed by a symbol.

No. 8. KOTIHAR STONE SLAB INSCRIPTION OF THE REIGN OF SHAHABHADENA (LAUKIKA) YEAR 45, 1369 A.D.

Kotihar is an important village of the Anantnag Tehsil situated 16 km. to the south of the Anantnag town 75° 18′ longitude and 33° 40′ latitude. It is an ancient place of pilgrimage having been mentioned by Kalhaṇa under its ancient name *Kapṭeśvara* among the sacred sites of Kashmir in the introduction of his celebrated work *Rājataraṅgiṇī*.[1]

The place of pilgrimage is the sacred spring of *Pāpasūdana* which rises in a large circular tank enclosed by an ancient stone wall which on the testimony of Kalhaṇa is believed to have been constructed by the famous ruler and patron of literature, King Bhoja of Mālava.[2] Śiva is believed to have shown himself in the disguise (*Kapaṭa*) of pieces of wood floating on the water of the spring. The legend has been described in detail in the *Nilmata Purāṇa*[3] and *Haracaritacintāmaṅi*[4] and was also known to Alberuni[5] and Abu-l-Fazl.[6]

Some time ago an inscription incised on an arch shaped well-polished stone encircled by a beaded border was found in the village and was later shifted to S.P.S. Musium, Srinager where it is now preserved. The stone is only partially preserved with its right hand lower corner broken leading to the loss of a valuable portion of the inscription. Only a few years ago a part of the lost fragment of the slab was also discovered by the curator of the said museum near a Pujari's house in the same locality.

The inscription consists of eighteen lines of writing, the fourth line containing only two letters. The last six lines are partly preserved. The inscription is written in verse with the exception of the last three lines of the text which are in prose. The text proper of the inscription

1. *RT*, 1.32. VII. 190. Stein, Translation, Vol 1, p. 6, 7. i. 32n.
2. *Ibid.*, VII. 190.
3. *Nīlamata*, VV. 1150-58.
4. *Haracaritacintāmaṇī*. XIV.
5. Alberuni, *India*. Vol. II, p. 181.
6. Abu-l-Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. II, p. 351.

beings from the fifth line. It appears that the engraver started the engraving a little above the middle of the stone and utilized the space left at the top end of the slab to cover the remaining portion of the inscription when the space proved insufficient at the lower end to cover the whole text. This is why the number of the verse given at the end of the first line is 10.

The inscription is in Śāradā characters but carelessly scribbled with the result that it presents lot of difficulty in decipherment. It is at times very difficult to establish the true value of a letter. Besides, the language is very incorrect Sanskrit and betrays the authors indifferent knowledge of Sanskrit language and grammar. The palaeographic peculiarities of the inscription have already been discussed above.

The portion recording the purport of the inscription is lost. But it probably recorded the construction of a religious hospice *dharmā-matha*) by an individual whose name is preserved only in part. The main portion of the inscription is devoted to the praise of the ruling king Shāhabhadena who may be identified with Sultan Shihab-u-din who ruled over Kashmir from 1354 A.D. to 1373 A.D.

The record is dated Thursday, the 12th lunar day of the bright half of Vaiśākha in the year 45. The year 45 referred to Laukika era corresponds to 1369 A.D. which well falls within the reign of Shihab-u-Din.

We may now attempt to brief analysis of the contents of the inscription the text of which has been only tentatively established as yet owing to reasons mentioned above.

The first verse contains an invocation of lord Heramba (Gaṇesa) who puts an end to all impediments just as sparks of fire consume in a moment the heaps of dry grass. The second verse is in praise of lord Śiva the forepart of whose body is clasped by the arm of the Ganges (?). In verses 3 to 6 we have an euology of the ruling king Shāhabhadena. We are told that in the sacred land of Kashmir, a country of prosperity, there ruled a great king Shāhabhadena born in the house of the Paṇḍavas; scorched by the fiery shaft of whose valour

the enemies ran away to remote corners apprehending as if pursued by a mad elephant. In verse six which is partly preserved we have the mention of Shihab-u-din's conquest of the land of Nadula.

Leaving aside the conventional portion of the priase we notice two points in this euology which are important from historical point of view. First is the mention of Śābabhadena or Shihab-u-din as a scion of Pāṇḍava house. This apparently sounds queer, for a Muhmmadan king could hardly claim descent from the Pāṇḍavas. Shri Kedar Nath Shastri[7] opined that the Sultan took pride in bring styled as a scion of the Pāṇḍdavas as he wanted to link himself with the ancient lunar race of India to justify his families accession to the throne of Kashmir by supplanting the Hindu dynasty of the valley. However, it seems more likely that the epithet is due to the pious wish on the part of the eulogiser to connect the great contemporary ruler to an illustrious and clebrated Kṣatriya family of the past simply because of his greatness and prowess and without any specific consideration of the faith to which the Sultan adhered. The second important point in the euology is Shihabhadena's victory over Nadula which is of great importance as the same is not mentioned in the Kashmir chronicles which otherwise give detailed account of the victories of the Sultan.

Unfortunately the identification of Nadula is not certain. It is not known whether it denotes the name of a king or a tribe. The text reads *yena Nadula-mahi jitā* which can either be interpreted as "by whom the kingdom of *Nadula* was conquered" or "by whom the land of the Nadulas (a tribe) was conquered". However, no king or tribe with this name is known to have ruled in or in the neighbourhood or Kashmir. The identification of Nadula as such remains uncertain. Kedar Nath Shastri suggests the alternative reading Madra.[8]

The Madras are an ancient Kṣatriya tribe whose history dates back to the Vedic times. In Vedic literature, they figure as a people

7. The late Kedar Nath Shastri was an eminent archaeologist, epigraphist and a Sanskrit Scholar. The present writer is deeply indebted to him for his valuable help in deciphering and interpreting the inscription.
8. This reading, however, is highly doubtful.

who appear to have been divided into two sections, viz. *dakṣina Madrah* or the southern Madras who lived in the Punjab and *Uttara Madrah* or the northern Madras who probably lived as Zimmer conjectures in the land of Kashmir not distant from the Kambojas[9]. In the *Aitreye* Brahmaṇa,[10] the Madras are mentioned as living beyond the Himalayas. In the *Aṣṭādhyaya*[11] Madradeśa or the land of Madras is mentioned as a *janapada* or a kingdom along with Kamboja, Gandhāra, etc. In the *Mahābhārata* the Madras are mentioned as allies of the Kaurvas and their king Śalya figures as the commander-in-chief of the Kaurava army. In the Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudragupta, the Madras are mentioned in the form of Madrakas as an autonomous frontier tribe, giving all kinds of taxes and obeying (his) orders and coming to perform obeisance.[12]

From these and several other references it seems that the country of Madras lay in the Punjab. Its capital was Śākala on modern Sialkot which stood on the back of the Apagā stream identified with modern Aik, a small stream which has its rise in Jammu hills and flows to the north-east of Sialkot.

Shihab-u-din credited with the conquest of a large number of countries and towns in the Kashmir chronicles as *e.g. Udabhāṇḍapura* (Ohind), *Sindhu* (Indus region), *Gandhāra* (North-western Pakistan), *Puruṣavīra* (Peshawar), *Hindughosha* (Hindu Kush), *Suśarmapura* (Kangra), *Bhauṭṭa*[14] (Ladakh), etc.[13] If the aforesaid reading of Kedarnath Shastri is accepted it would seem that Shihab-u-din while annexing *Gandhāra*, western Panjab and some parts of eastern Panjab including *Suśarmapura* or Kot Kangra also traversed the central Panjab and conquered the Sialkot region of the *Madradeśa* as it was called then.

The rest of the text is only partly preserved and it is not pissible to make out any sense of the preserved portion. In verse seven king

9. Keith and Macdonnel, *Vedic Indix*, Vol. I, pp. 84-8 5.
10. *Aitreya Brahmaṇa*, VIII. 14.3.
11. Pāṇinī, *Aṣṭadhyāyī*, IV. 2.131.
12. Fleet, *CII*, Vol. III, No. 1.
13. Jonarāja, *Dvitīya Rājataraṅgiṇī*, VV. 425-47.

Shihab-u-din is probably compared with Rāghava or Rāma perhaps in bravery. In verses ten and eleven we have probably the mention of the contruction of the religious hospice by some individual the last part of whose partly preserved name reads Sodā. The construction by the hospice took place in the year 45 on the 12th lunar day of the dark half of Vaiśākha in the reign of some king whose name is unfortunately lost but probably of Shihab-u-din euologised in the epigraph.

Lastly we have the mention of the individuals name Bhansa (Vamśa) deva, Singhava and Gaṇakpakṣaka who respectively prepared the stone, drafted the text and incised the same on the stone slab.

The incription ends with the mention of the date this time given in figures, as *Sam* 45, 12th lunar day of the dark half of Vaiśākha, Thursday.

Text[14]

1. सौदाभिया पुण्यमिदं चकार ।। १० ।।
2. भङ्ग देव गटि सिङ्गववेन ग्रथितं ।
3. लिखि गणक्पक्षक : सं ४५ वै वति १२ गुरू
4. वारे
5. श्रो खस्ति । ओं नमो विग्रहत्री । ब्रह्माकीर्णसं सि-
6. न्दूर पुष्कर जनः हेरम्भेध्यान्महत्विघ्न तृणं वह्नि क-
7. भैरिव ।१। अपव्रन्न (?) ग्रहवङ्क्षागृहीताह्यग्र विग्रहः
8. जीवाश्चिन्मातृमहिमा स हिमाद्रिसुतापतिः ।२। स्वस्ति
9. अस्ति सखस्तले पुन्य कश्मीरमण्डले शहब देनो राजेन्द्रश्श्रोम त्पा -
10. ण्उवंशजः ।३। प्रतापाग्निविशाखेनद्रागित...
11. घ्य पूरितश्चन्द्रायुत शुभ्र यसोभरै ।४। यश्च प्रोचण्उकोदण्डज्याथो ।
12. षाकर्धनाकुलः दूरं यान्ति द्विषद्वंशा गजोन्मतस्म शंकया ।५। भजमि (?)

14. Copied from the original. The text was only to be considered as tentative. All the readings are not beyond doubt. The text has not been corrected in the transcription. Since the contents of the inscription have been discussed above in detail, the translation has not been found to be necessary.

13. त्रसह येन नदुलमहोजिता श्री गोमन्द (?) दिविजय रूषोत्कण्ठा निजजन......
14. यश्च सौ कार्य......
15. णेनेव राघवः ।७। मित्र जयजौतिसोखनस्य......
16. मित्रकण्ठ सन्ततिवान्दिनात्र । दोवारि......तस्य दयगित्रे न (?)
17. धर्म मठासंहृदयम्...(८) संध्व शरवेद......
18. ज्ये वैशाख कृष्णपक्ष द्वादश्यां...पुण्यातौ वग्यजि...स.

No. 9. KHONAMUH STONE INSCRIPTION OF TIME OF JAYANOLABADEN-ASĀHA, KALI 4530.

The Kashmirian village of Khonamukh consists of two separate hamlets, lying one above the other, situated about nine miles to the south-east of Srinagar, at 75° 1′ longitude and 35° 5′ latitude. It is referred to by Kalhaṇa in hīs *Rājataraṅgiṇī* under the name Khonamuha, as an *agrāhara* settlement of brahmans established by king Khagendra VI, predecessor of the Maurya king Aśoka. The Kashmiri poet Bilhaṇa, who was born in this village, describes it in his *Vikramāṅkadevacarita*, (18.71-72) as "the ancient home of wonderful legends, a conquettish embellishment of the bosom of mount Himalaya, one part of which bears the saffron in its native loveliness, the other the grape, pale like a cut juicy sugarcane from Sarayu's banks". On the slopes above the village issues an underground stream at a place locally known as Bhuvaneśvarī, on the route to the famous *tīrtha* of Harṣeśvara. At the mouth of this stream is a large stone on which occurs an inscription in ten lines covering space of 1.45 metres in length and 0.30 metre in height (at the centre).

This inscription in the Śāradā script of the 15th century A.D. is in perfect state of preservation. The palaeographic peculiarities of the inscription have already been discussed above.

As regards orthography, we notice the indiscriminate use of *ś* and *ṣ* in *parameṣa,* line 5 and *mārgaśūrśe,* line 7, and *d* for *dh* in *rākābhidasya,* line 8 and *goggakabhidah,* line 10.

The inscription is composed in Sanskrit verse, with the exception of the date portion in beginning. It contains nine verses, of which 1, 3, 4, 5, 8 and 9 are in *anuṣṭubh,* while verse 2 is in *vasantatilakā.* Verses 6 and 7 are in *upajāti* and *mandākrāntā,* respectively.

The language of the inscription is influenced by the local dialect. The errors in composition have been corrected while giving the text below. The date is given in the first line as *Sam* 5, *Mārgaśuti* 5, *Śukre.* The *Sam* 5 evidently a mistake for 4 (see below) refers to the Laukika era and the date corresponds to Friday, December 3,

1428 A.D. The inscription belongs to the reign of king Zain-ul-Ābidin who ruled Kashmir from 1420 to 1470 A.D.

The inscription records the construction of a hermitage by a certain merchant named Pūrṇaka, son of Suva, where a certain ascetic Gammatisodaka by name, coming from the castle of Jāyapīḍa, performed penance and by constant meditation found his way to Śiva.

The first verse is an invocation to the Universal Soul (*sarvātmā*) described as selfless (*anātmā*) and free from the distinction of existant (*sad*) and non-existent (*asad*). The second verse states that in the year 4530 of the Kali era, there was in *Satisaras* a king named Jayanolabadena, son of the illustrious Sakandara. *Satisaras* is the ancient name of Kashmir (vide *Nīlamatapurāṇa*, 26.237). Jayanolabadena is the Sanskritised form of Zai-ul-abidin, son of Sikandar (Sakandara), who ruled Kashmir from 1389 to 1413 A.D., the date of the inscription 4530 corresponding to 1429 A.D. The third verse mentions the village Khonamośa an *agrahāra* of king Khagendra. This verse also contains a reference to the *deśādhipati* Chhindaka. The fourth verse records the consecration of a hermitage in the village by a certain trader named Pūrṇaka, son of Suva.

The fifth verse mentions the famous *tīrtha* of Harṣeśvara and gives the name of the place where the stream flows as Bhavaneśa which accounts for the modern name Bhavaneśvari. The *tīrtha* of Harṣeśvara is situated on the summit of the high ridge which rises to the north of the village. The object of worship here is a *svayambhu-linga* enshrined in a small cave and pilgrimage to the *tīrtha* is performed annually on the full moon day of the month of *Śrāvaṇa*.

Verses six and seven relate that a certain asectic named Gammatisodaka came to the place (Khonamuh) from the castle of king Jayāpīda to practise penance near the celestial stream and, having conquered the evil forces, he engaged himself in meditation and found his way to Śiva. The mention of the castle is of interest as it is mentioned also in the *Rājataraṅgiṇī* (4.506), where a full legend is told in connection with its construction by king Jayāpiḍa. The

castle was known in Kalhaṇa's time (12th century) as *Abhyantara-koṭṭa*. Prof. Bühler, in the course of his tour of the valley in 1875, traced the site of the castle near the modern village of Anderkut situated on the Sumbal lake in the Baramulla District at 74° 12′ long. and 34° 13′ lat. It is also mentioned by Śrīvara, the 15th century chronicler, at several places in his chronicle and his reference together with our own would show that the place continued to be known in the 15th century by the name of Jayāpīḍa-pura (for durga), 'the town or castle founded by Jayāpīḍa'.

Verse 8 gives the date of the consecration of the hermitage as the fifth day of the bright fortnight of the month of *Mārgaśīrṣa* in the (Laukika) year 4 which corresponds to December 3, 1428.

The ninth and the last verse, mentions two individuals Katha and Kanathaka who were witnesses to the consecration and the writer of the inscription who was a sculptor named Gaggaka.

The inscription is important in more than one respect. First, it contains dates both in the Laukika and the Kali eras. Secondly, it mentions four royal personages who ruled over Kashmir in different periods, being Khagendra, Jayāpīḍa, Sikandara and Zain-ul-ābidin. Thirdly, it mentions an official with the designation *deśādhipati*(*line* 3). *Deśa*, frequently mentioned in inscriptions, signifies a territorial division. Since Khonamuh is too small a village to be called either a province or a district and since the districts in ancient Kashmir were more generally known as *Viṣayas*, we may assume that *deśa* was a sub-division of a district, and *deśādhipati* was obviously an Officer in charge of such a sub-division. Lastly, the epigraph contains the mention of five geographical names, viz. Satisaras, Khomamoṣa, Harṣeśvara, Bhuvaneśa and the *durga* or castle of Jayāpīḍa; all of which have been discussed above.

Text[1]

1. ओं[2] सं ५[3] मार्ग शुति ५ शुक्रे ।
अनात्मा विश्वभूतात्मा निर्गुणस्तगुणश्च यः ।
सदसद्व्यक्तिरहितस्तस्मै सर्वात्मने नमः ॥ (२*)
त्रिंशाधिके च शतभूतयुते कलस्य[4] (कलेः)
2. याते सहस्रचतुरे शरदा बभूव ।
श्रीमत्सकन्दरसुतो धरणीधरेन्द्र-
स्खतीखरे ह जयनोलवदेन शाहः (२*)
अग्रहारे खगेन्द्रस्य खोनमोशे ह भूपतेः[5] (।)
3. द्विजेशो (श) श्छिन्दकश्श्रीमान्देशाधिपतिरित्यभूत् ॥ (३*)
अत्राग्रहारे वणिज ४ पूर्णकोभूत्सुवात्मजः (।)
अनेन पुण्यवृद्धर्थमाप्रमो (यं) प्रचक्रिरे ॥ (४*)
4. हऐश्विरस्य देवस्य योजनार्धमधरिस्थता ।
भुवनेशास्य निकटौ (निकटे) खर्न्नदा पापहारिणी ॥ (५*)
गङ्गसमीपे परमेष (श) भक्त्या
5. तप्तुं तपो ज्ञानपरोत्र योगी ।
जयाख्यपीउस्य नृपस्य दुर्गात्समाययौ गम्मतिखोदकाख्यः ॥ (६*)
6. जित्वा मारं प्रबलतमसं बद्धपद्मासनस्थ-
स्स्मृत्वा ध्यानमलुठितपदमक्षयं सेवमानः (१*)
काले तेनैवेह कलियुगे लब्धमार्गश्शिवस्य
7. सत्यं दार्ढ्ये किमपि न पदं सिध्यते सर्वलोके ॥ (७*)
मार्गश्यू (शी) र्शे (र्षे) सिते पक्षे चतुर्थ्यथ वत्सरे ।
8. इह स्थाने प्रतिष्ठाभूत्पञ्चम्यां शुक्रबासरे ॥ (८*)
राकाभिद (ध) स्य
9. वणिज ४ पुत्रौ कत्थकनत्थकौ ।
स्थितौ तत्रास्ति लेखज्ञस्तक्षको गग्गका-
10. भिद (ध):(९*)

1. The inscription has been copied from the original and the facsimile. It was first noticed by Marshall, vide his *Note*, p. 18.
2. Expressed by a symbol.
3. Appears to be mistake for 4, see verse 8 below.
4. Probably for *Kaleśca*, to meet the requirements of the metre.
5. पते : form the starting syllables of the 3rd line.

Translation

Om. Friday, the 5th lunar day of the bright fortnight of Mārga (śīrṣa), (Laukika) year 4.

Verse 1. Salutation to that Universal Soul, who is selfless, life of all beings, who has no attributes and is (yet) invested with them and who is exempt from the distinction of existent and non-existent.

Verse 2. When four thousand years increased by five hundred and thirty of the Kali (era) had elapsed, there (ruled) in Satisara a king (named) Jayanolabadenaśāha (Zain-ul-abidin), the son of the illustrious Sakandra (Sikandar).

Verse 3. At Khonamoṣa, the *agrāhāra* of (*i.e.* established by) kind Khagendra, the illustrious Chindaka a Brahmaṇa was the *Deśādhipati*.

Verse 4. In this *agrahāra* there lived a merchant Pūrṇaka, the son of Suva. By him was built this hermitage for an increase of the religious merit.

Verse 5. Situated half a *yojanā* below (the shrine) of the god Harṣeśvara near Bhuvaneśa (flows) the celestical stream, the remover of all sin.

Verse 6. From the castle of king Jayāpiḍa there came (to this place) an ascetic Gammatisodaka by name, seeking wisdom, to practise penance near the Ganges (*i.e.* celestical stream) out of great devotion to the Lord (Śiva).

Verse 7. Having conquered Māra of powerful darkness, seated in firm *padmāsana* posture, he engaged himself in meditation desirous of attaining that state of imperishableness which knows no fall and in fullness of time, he found his way to Śiva in the Kaliyuga by means even of that (contemplation). For what position is there in the whole universe which cannot be achieved by firmness in truth.

Verse 8. In the year 4 (of the Laukika era) in the bright fortnight of *Mārgaśīrṣa* on the fifth lunar day which was a Friday did the consecration (of the hermitage) take place at this spot.

Verse 9. Katha and Kanathaka, the son of merchant named Raka stood there (as witness). The writer was the sculptor named Gaggaka.

No. 10. PAREPUR STONE INSCRIPTION OF THE TIME OF HASANA LAUKIKA YEAR 52, 1476 A.D.

Parepur is a small hamlet situated 8 km. to the west of Kalarus and 12 km. to the west of the town of Kupwara, headquarter of the district of the same name. Here at the site of an ancient spring locally known as Vāsukī Nāg an inscription incised on a big stone 2′10″ high and 2′6″ broad was discovered by Sten Konow during his archaeological tour of Kashmir in 1908. Only the first two lines of the same have been described by him in his *Note on the Archaeological Tour of Kashmir*, p.13.

The inscription is still traceable at its original site but is now in a highly defaced condition. It is written in badly cut Śāradā characters and in corrupt Sanskrit. Of the twelve lines originally noted by Sten Konow only ten are traceable now, the first two lines containing the name of the king and the date having been lost owing to the peeling off of the upper surface of the stone. Fortunately the text of these two lines has been preserved by Sten Konow in his report referred to above. The stone has also suffered a great damage at the lower right hand corner leading to the loss of the major portion of the extant inscription. The king Hasan mentioned in the inscription has been identified by Sten Konow (*op. cit.*) with the king Hasan Shah who ruled over Kashmir from 1472 to 1484 A.D. The date of the inscription *Saṁ* 52 *Vai Śu ti* 15 corresponds according to Sten Konow to 10th of May 1476.

The king Hasan is mentioned in the inscription with the epithet *devamathana* or destroyer of gods. The epithet according to Sten Konow (*op. cit.*) may be due to king Hasan's iconoclastic activities. Hasan's history is dealt with in the third Taraṅga of Śrīvara's *Rājataraṅgiṇī*. But nowhere do we get an impression of his having been either a bigot or an iconoclast. By *deva-mathana* we have to understand one who is opposed to the worship of the idols of gods. Hasan Shah as a true Muslim was not well disposed towards idol worship but all the same he guaranteed full freedom of worship to his Hindu subjects and encouraged the study of Sanskrit, of which according to Śrīvara he was a great poet. No literary composition of Hasan in Sanskrit has however survived.

Owing to the fragmentary condition of the inscription and its corrupt language and roughly and carelessly executed characters it is not possible to make out anything of the preserved portion. However, it is interesting to find the mention of three place names in the epigraph, viz., Kaśapādrī (*l.* 3) Kaśapasari (*l.* 5) and Tukhāra (*l.* 6) though it is not known in what connection they are mentioned in the epigraph.

The place name *Kaśāpādrī* is not known from any other source. Its identification is, as such, difficult. It may be a mistake for Kaśyapādrī meaning Kaśyapas, hill or the hill sacred to sage Kaśyapa, the mythical founder of Kashmir. No hill with this name is, however, known in Kashmir.

Kaśapa-sari may be restored as Kasapa-sarit or the river sacred to Kaśapa (Kaśyapa). This name, however, is not borne by any river in Kashmir. It appears that the inscription contains mention of some sacred place of pilgrimage in the hills where the hill and the stream flowing therefrom were both held sacred to the sage Kaśyapa[1].

The mention of the third place name *Tukhāra* is important and would have been of great interest had we been in a position to ascertain as to in what connection it is mentioned in the epigraph. Tukhāra mentioned in several Sanskrit texts as e.g. *Viṣṇu Purāna, Vikramankadeva-carita,*[3] *Rājataraṅgiṇī*[4], etc., and also referred to by Huien Tsang,[5]

1. Our inscribed stone stands on the left bank of a stream flowing from the spring called 'Vāsukī Nāg' referred to above. The spring itself is at the foot of a hill. This spring like several others of this type in the valley has been a famous place of pilgrimage. It is possible that the hill and the stream might have been associated with the name of sage Kaśyapa in the past. The place is now inhabited by a few Gujjars who, however, have no knowledge of either the hill or the stream having been ever associated with Kaśyapa.
2. Lassen, *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, Vol II, p. 186.
3. Bilhaṇa, *Vikramāṅkadeva-carita*, ix. 116, xviii, 93.
4. Kalhaṇa *RT*, iv 166, 246, where Lalitāditya is credited with the conquest of Tukhāra and his Minister Cankuna is described as originally hailing from Tukhāra land.
5. Beal, *Life of Huen Tsang* (Si-yu-ki), Vol. 1, p. 37

probably represents the Tokharistan of the early medieval writers denoting the region of the upper Oxus valley including Balakh and Badakshan. Hasan Shah is not known to have been a great conqueror and it is difficult even to surmise the import of the mention of this place in the epigraph. The word *Tukhāra* is followed in our record by the numerical figures 12. From this we may infer that the word denotes here the horses of Tukhara region mentioned also by Kalhaṇa and Bilhaṇa in the passages cited above.

The defaced and the fragmentary condition of the epigraph stands in the way of our fully ascertaining the import of these expressions in this valuable record from a remote corner of the valley.

Text[6]

1. परमभट्टारक महाराज देव मथन हसन पाद
2. सं ५२ वै शुति २५
3. कष (श्य) पादि...प्रद्रि...की...
4. पूजा मन्दो कृतं...
5. अनेशक-सुत-पेलक कश (श्य) प सरि (त्*)...
6. श्री...तुखारे १२ क देवं...नं अद...
7. मजसि-लेषी-गवी नय......गतं पा—
8. लनीयं भवतां पते देयं...
9. पूजा विभुज...
10. कुरूटल (?) विशशियम...
11. पथी मथीन कोछा
12. तव जन-पन-पती उपजी छंनकर विजी संचह

Translation[7]

In the year 52 on the 15th Lunar day of the bright half of *Vaiśākha* in the reign of the supreme lord Mahārāja Devamathana Hasan.......

6. From the original and an old photograph supplied by Professor Jagannath Agarwal.
7. Owing to the fragmentary condition of the inscription and its corrupt language influenced by the local vernacular it is not possible to give a connected translation of the text.

No. 11. HARIPARBAT (SRINAGAR) GRAVE STONE INSCRIPTION OF THE REIGN OF MUHAMMAD SHAH, (LAUKIKA) YEAR 60: 1484. A.D.

The inscription is engraved on a grave in the cemetry surrounding the Ziarat of Baha-u-din at Hariparbat in Srinagar. It is billingual in character being written in Persian and Sanskrit languages in Persio-Arabic and Śāradā scripts respectively. It has been referred to by Hulztsch in *ZDMG*, Vol. LX, p. 9 and Kielhorn in *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XX, p. 153 and described by Marshall in his *Note on Tour in Kashmir*, p. 17.

The inscription is an epigraph commemorating the death of certain Seda Khan, son of Aibrahm, who fell in the battle at the feet of Jiṣthaludra in the reign of Muhammad Shah. The epigraph is dated in the year 60, (Hijri 889) on Friday, the first day of the dark fortnight of the month of *Śrāvaṇa* in the reign of Muhammad Shah. Muhammad Shah is undoubtedly the muslim king of this name who ruled over Kashmir at chequered intervals from 1484 A.D. to 1537 A.D. The date of the inscription, corresponds according to the calculations of Kielhorn to Friday, 9th July, 1484 A.D.

There can be no doubt that the battle referred to in the inscription is the same battle which was fought at Srinagar between the Sayyids and the Kashmiri nobles in the time of the minor king Muhammad Shah. The date of the inscription coincides with the date of the termination of the battle as given by Śrīvara.[1]

Seda Khan mentioned in the inscription seems to be identical with Saida Khan described by Śrīvara[2] as one of the great soliders who fought on the side of the Sayyids. Unfortunately Śrīvara gives no details about Said Khan and the identification of his father Aibrahim is as such, difficult. In the Persian inscription accompanying our epigraph the name given is Ibrahim Shah. Marshall[3] suggests that he may be identical with Ibrahim Shah Sharqui king of Jaunpur ruling from 1401 to 1440 A.D. who along with his son Saida Khan

1. *Jaina-Rājataraiṅgiṇī*, IV. 334
2. *Ibid.*
3. *op. cit.*

seems to have fled to Kashmir on the annexation of Janupura by Bahlol Lodhi in 1474 A.D.

The epigraph mentions two place names, *Jiṣthaludra* and *Hājara*. In place of *Jiṣthaludra* we have in the accompanting Persian epigraph of the same content *Takht-i-gahi sulaiman* which would show that Jiṣthaludra and Tahkt-i-Sulaiman are the same. The latter is the Persian designation of the modern hill of Śankaracārya situated to the south east of Srinagar and *Jiṣthaludra* of our inscription would evidently denote the same. The place is mentioned in the form of *Jyeṣṭharudra* in the *Rājataraṅgiṇī*[4] and described as a shrine erected by king Jalauka at Srinagar. This shrine has not yet been definitely identified. Stein[5] points out that the shrine is to be located somewhere near the present hill of Śaṅkarācārya. Our inscription would show how in the 15th century the name *Jyeṣṭhaludra* or *Jyeṣṭharudra* was applied to the hill itself. The same is corroborated by the *Mahādeva mahātmya* were *Jyeṣṭharudra* has been used in two passages to denote the present hill of Saṅkarācārya.[6]

As regards the other place name Hājara, it is not clear in what connection it is mentioned in the inscription. Marshall[7] feels inclined to identify it with Hazara in the Peshwar district of west Pakistan.

Text[8]

ओं[9] सं ६० श्रा व ति प्र शुक्र हाजर प्रदेशे खात्रान (ण)
ऐब्राह्‌मपुत्र सेदखान सङ्ग्रामकृत...न आगतः जिष्ठ लुद्रस्त (स्थ)-
ल कलेप वाला...दस्थ) (?) महमदुशाह राज्ये

4. *RT*, i, 124, see Stein, Trans. *RT*, Vol II, p. 289, for full discussion on this important place name.
5. Stein, *op. cit*.
6. *Ibid.*
7. Marshall *op. cit.*, p. 18, fn. 4.
8. From the original, photographs and Marshall's above quoted Tour Report.
9. Expressed by a symbol.

Translation[10]

Om. In the year 60, on Friday, the first lunar day of the dark fortnight of Śrāvaṇa. In the district of Hājara, Sedakhāna, son of *Svātrāṇa* (Sultan) Aibrahm a having......in the battle at the foot of *Hiṣṭhaludra*.........in the reign of Muhammad Shah.

10. The translation of the acompanying Persian epigraph is as under :
"In the (Hijri) year 889 Said Khan became a martyr on the Takht-i-Sulaiman. May his end be good. Messenger..............A son of Ibrahim Shah, he committed his life to God and attained heaven on the day of Friday."

Nos. 12-13. DIGOM (KAPAL—MOCHAN) INSCRIPTIONS

Digom or Kapal Mochan is a famous place of pilgrimage noted for its ancient three springs situated at the foot of a hill about 27 miles to the south-east of Srinagar in the Shopian Tehsil of district Pulwama. It is a short distance from Shopian the head-quarters of a Tehsil of the same name. Here two stone inscriptions in the Śāradā characters were discovered by Pandit Anand Kaul and the same were later described by him in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. VII, pp. 87-89. The inscriptions are no longer traceable now. Their facsimilies too have not unfortunately been given in the aforesaid journal.

Inscription No. 1

This inscription according to Pt. Anand Kaul was discovered by local priests while digging near the point where the waters of the three springs meet. The inscription is a fragment and its exact meaning cannot be made out.

Text

1. ......यश्वे सर्पंतुरस्स...
2. ......चाभि व्ययश्वनः ऽ आदौ...
3. ......तियो भूद्दितीयास्यु...
4. ......सद्विवायत् व्याताहि या......
5. ......काग्निशिखाकलापनि वह......
6. ......ये नायकाग्ने......याश्व...
7. ......ष्वच पंडितेषु ऽ शाश्वान्नर......

It is not possible to give a connected translation of the inscription.

Inscription No. 2 (Vikram) year 1846, 1789 A.D.

This inscription is more important than the previous one in as much as it contains the date. It says that a bath in the spring enables one get rid of his sins just as a snake gets rid of its old skin. It

records the donation of a religious institution into which the inscribed stone had been built to a Pandit of Soma caste......the year legible in the inscription is Vikramaditya era 846 but presumable it is 1846 as there seems to be a battered figure before 846. The year corresponds to 1789 A.D.

Text

1. यथा प्रमुंचे स (त्स) पंस्तु कंचुक (:) स्त्र (श) री.
2. रतः तथा प्रमुंचेत् स्नातस्तु पायं कं-
3. चुकमत्रह्य (हि) ११ विक्रम सं (१) ८४६
4. पण्डित सोमजाति...त्मज
5. ...कस्य धर्म सदनं ददानि
6. इत्येवं शिवम् (।*)

Translation

Just as a snake discards his old skin from its body so here (at the spring) a person taking bath in the spring gets rid of his sins. Vikrama era (1) 846. I give this religious abode (as donation) to a Pandita of Soma caste.

No. 14. VONTAPOR (AVANTIPUR) GHAṬA (EARTHEN JAR) INSCRIPTION OF A(VA)NTIVARMAN.

Vontapor or Avantipur is a small town situated on the right bank of the Vitastā on the Srinagar Jammu National Highway about 30 km to the south-east of Srinagar, 75° 48′ longitude and 33° 55′ latitude. This town was founded by the great Utpala king Avantivarman[1] who ruled over Kashmir from 855 A.D. to 883 A.D. His reign, described at length by Kalhaṇa,[2] is particularly remarkable for the great engineering projects he launched to check floods, increase production and reshape the economy of the valley that had been shattered by the repeated floods and by the internal troubles and internecine fightings for the throne during the preceding reigns. Avantivarman embellished his newly founded town by two magnificant temples called after him as Avanteśvara and Avantisvāmin dedicated to gods Śiva and Viṣṇu respectively.[3] The two temples still *in situ* are now in ruins but even in ruins are grand and imposing evoking highest admiration for the skill of their builders.

A large assortment of antiquities has been unearthed during the excavation of the temple of Avantisvāmī. The antiquities include a series of sculptures and large jars which are now preserved in the S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar. One of the antiquities unearthed is part of a huge earthen vessel called *maṭ* in Kashmiri and used for storing grain. It bears an inscription in Sanskrit in one line measuing 1′3″ in length. The characters are Śāradā and appear to represent the earliest phase of this alphabet as is evidenced by the shape of letters, *a*, *m*, *h*, *gh*, and *ṭ*. The inscription proper is followed by the numerical figures 1543. As regards orthography we find the name Avantivarma inscribed as Antivarma, the intervening letter *va* having been omitted.

The inscription reads *Maha Śrī A(va)ntivarma ghaṭa* 1543, or the storage vessel (*ghaṭa*) (belonging to) the great and illustrious A(va)ntivarma.

1. *RT*, U. 44
2. *Ibid.*, IV, 716 sqq. and U. 2 sqq.
3. *Ibid.*, U. 45.

The king A(va)ntivarma may be indentified with the celebrated ruler of this name, the founder of the town of Avantipur and the temples Avantiswāmī and Avanteśvara referred to above. The epigraph evidently refers to the *ghaṭa* as having originally belonged to the temple of Avantiswāmī founded by Avantivarma from whose precincts the same was excavated. It thus furnishes an independent evidence of the indentification of the present temple in ruins with the temple of Avantisvāmī founded by Avantivarman.

The exact significance of the numerical figures is uncertain. Sir John Marshall[4] who happened to see the inscription in the Srinagar Museum, took the figures as representing the date of the inscription. He referred it to the Vikram era and according to him the date corresponded to 1485 A.D. According to him the inscription furnishes proof of the reoccupation of the temple of Avantisvāmī after its destruction by Sultan Sikandar in the 14th century. He opined that the storage vessel must have been donated by a pious piligrim to the sacred temple after its reoccupation. However, there is no evidence of the reoccupation of the temple after its destruction. The contemporary chroniclers Jonarāja and Śrīvara do not mention any such event. Besides, it is by no means certain that the numerical figures represent the date. They are not proceded by the word *Samvat* or *Sam*. Palaeographically also the inscription does not belong to so late a period. Its characters as noted above, represent the earliest phase of the Śāradā alphabet and bear close resemblance with those used in the coins of Avantivarman. As such, it is not unlikely that the inscription is contemporaneous with Avantivarman himself. In that case the epigraph would be the earliest known Śāradā inscription discovered in the valley so far. The numerical figures may indicate the serial number of the object, in the present case a vessel, belonging to the temple.

4. Marshall, Note, p. 20.

Text[5]

महा श्री अ (व) न्तिवर्म घट । १५४६

Translation

The storage vessel of the great and illustrious A(va)ntivarma. (serial number) 1546.

5. From the original and the photograph.

No. 15. MARTAND STONE INSCRIPTION

Martand is the site of a celebrated ancient temple dedicated to the Sun god Mārtaṇḍa and generally believed to have been constructed by the great Kārkoṭa ruler Lalitāditya in the 8th century A.D.[1] The temple of gigantic dimensions with rich collonaded peristyle and massive stone walls now lies in ruins having been destroyed according to Jonarāja by Sultan Sikandar in the 14th century.[2] It has lost much of its original popularity and sanctity and is now mainly a site of archaeological interest furnishing one of the most impressive specimens of ancient temple architecture of Kashmir. It has been mentioned by Kalhaṇa at several places in his *Rājataraṅgiṇī* and it was the place where Kalaśa took refuge in the last moments of his life and breathed his last at the feet of the sacred image of the God Mārtaṇḍa.[3] King Harṣa out of reverence for the sacred shrine spared this temple from ruthless confiscation to which other famous shrines of the valley were subjected by him.[4] The temple was also known to Abul Fazl[5] and has been described in detail by the modern European scholars like Hugel,[6] Vigne,[7] Cunningham,[8] Cole,[9] Marshall,[10] Fergussan[11] etc.

The courtyard of the temple was excavated some time ago and among the antiquities unearthed was a stone slab bearing an inscription in the Śāradā characters. The slab has suffered damage with its surface peeled of on all corners, with the result that a good portion of the inscription is lost. It is now preserved in a wooden almirah at

1. *RT*, IV. 192.
2. *Dvitīya Rājataraṅgiṇī* 599.
3. *RT*, VII. 709, 715, 722.
4. *Ibid.*, VII 1096.
5. *Ain-i-Akb.* p. 358
6. *Kashmir*, Vol. II, p. 453 seqq.
7. *Travels* Vol. I, pp. 360
8. *JASB*, 1848, pp. 258. sqq.
9. *Ancient buildings of Kashmir*, pp. 19 sqq.
10. *Note*, pp. 25 qq.
11. *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, p. 286.

the ruined site of the temple. The text of the inscription deciphered by late Pt. Madhusadhan Kaul and its facsimilie have been published by Sh. R.S. Pandit in his translation of the *Rājataraṅgiṇi*, plate xi Appendix.

The inscription consists of eight lines in verse. The first three are benedictory and the fourth appears to record the consecration of a *bimba* of Martanda, the Sun God by the illustrious Śrī Varmā in the 70th regnal year (?) of some King whose name is unfortunately lost. Owing to the fragmentary condition of the inscription and an important portion of the inscription bearing the date being lost, it is not possible to identify either the donor Śrī Varmā or the ruling king. There is also some doubt with regard to the interpretation of the partly preserved expression *Saptati rājya*...... tentatively rendered by Shri M.S. Kaul "in the 70th regnal year". No historical ruler of Kashmir is known to have ruled for such a long period.

Text

1. ......दृत: यश्चायं......
2. पद्मोभव हेतुत:...खान्नाभिपद्मोदभवाद् ब्रहमप्राप्ति कृतोध (म :)
3. ......व्याद्युग्रधामोत्करश्शलाध्य×कर्तु रपि प्रजां प्रतिदिनङ्ककुवन्नि वाशान्नवाम् ॥ वि...
4. ......वादव्याप्त जगत्नयाश्श्रितदय×कुर्वन्त दैवोदयम् (।*) चक्रकान्ति समुज्ज्वल X परिप...
5. तो मुररिरेपि ॥ क्रान्तानन्तदिगम्बरात्कर परिव्याप्त त्रिलोकीतलाद्गोभि...
6. ......मतानि ज्ञानशशभृत्खडस्य धाम प्रभुर्भ्राम्यन्नृत विद्यायिनोपि जगतो यश्शंकर
7. प प्रियोस्य त्र्यक्षपेन्द्राब्जजानां प्रसभमपहृताशेष रक्षाश्रमस्य श्रीमा......
8. ......श्रीमृताण्डस्य बिम्बं श्रीश्रीवर्मा सपर्याहितमतिरकृत श्री...सप्ततिराज्य...

Translation

1. .... supported he who is......
2. ......on account of being sprung from a lotus......who made an effort to attain the position of Brahmā by giving him birth from a lotus sprung from his own naval......

3. Who is adored even by the creator of people (Brahmā) and who having pervaded with his scorching and lustrous rays......makes the quarters new as it were everyday.
4. Who the merciful one having pervaded the three worlds and rising everyday, is rediant with the wielding of his discus......... even of Murārī (Viṣṇu).
5. On account of the numerous quarters crossed by him and the surface of the three worlds pervaded by his rays......
6. Even, Śaṅkara, who is lord of the world, who performs (the famous *tāṇḍava*) dance, is (constantly) on move and is an abode of the crescent of knowledge......
7. Of him who forcibly snatched away the burden of the complete protection (of the Universe) from Śiva, Viṣṇu and Brahmā......
8. The illustrious Śrī Varmā with mind intent on performing worship got constructed this orb of the illustrious Mṛtāṇḍa in the 70th year from the reign of (?).

No. 16. THE S.P.S. MUSEUM BUDDHIST IMAGE INSCRIPTION

This inscription is incised all along the semi-circular back of an image of seated Buddha cast in brass. The image was acquired by the curator of the S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar from a Curio dealer of Jammu a few years ago. The original find spot of the image remains unknown.

The inscription contains the famous Buddhist creed *ye dharma hatu prabhava*, etc., in well-cut Śāradā characters representing the earliest phase of the development of this alphabet and akin to those incised on the pedestal of the bronze image of the Bodhisatva Padmapaṇī described above.

Text

ये धर्मा हेतु प्रभवा हेतुं तेषां तथागतः ह्यवदत्
तेषां च यो निरोध एवं वादी महाश्रमणः ।

Translation

The Tathagata has explained (literary said) the origin of those things which proceed from a cause. Their cessation too he has explained. This is the doctrine of the great Śramaṇa.

No. 17. BUDDHIST IMAGE INSCRIPTION OF ŚAṄKARASENA AND DEVAŚRIYA

The inscription is incised on the lower portion of the base of a bronze image of the Buddha, the original find spot of which is unknown. Judged from the iconographic features of the Buddha and the two *stupas* depicted in the image which are distinctly Kashmiri in style, the statutte appears to hail from Kashmir. The image has been fully described by P. Pal in the *Bronzes of Kashmir*, p. 106.

The inscription is in incorrect Sanskrit and in the Śāradā characters representing the earliest phase of the development of this script. It is dated in the year 8 on the second lunar day of the bright half of Vaiśakha. It records the consecration of the pious gift consisting of the image itself by Śaṅkara Sena, a great devotee (of the Buddha) and the chief of the elephant corps (*Mahāgajapati*) and by the princess Devaśriyā, a great devotee of and having a great faith in the Buddha. It is not clear what relation did Devaśriyā bear to Saṅkarasena but since both have been depicted on the either side of the pedestal of the image in a worshiping attitude it is not unlikely that they, as pointed out by Mr. Pal, represent a couple. The two donors are dressed not in a Kashmiri style, but in a Scythian costume. Sāṅkara Sena as such, may have been a Shahi noble of Kabul and in the employ of some Kashmiri king presiding over the elephant corps of the army. That the Shahi nobles and princes were employed by Kashmiri rulers and held important posts under them is attested to by several references to them in the *Rājataraṅgiṇī*.[1]

Text

1. संवत्सरे ८ वैशाखा शुदि २ ।। देयधर्मोयं परमोपासक महागजपति । संकर से-
2. णस्य ।। देय धर्मोयं महा श्रद्धायापर मोपा सिक्या राजदुहितृ देव श्रयाया:

1. *Cf.* vii, 144 sqq. 178, 274.

Corrected Text

1. संवत्सरे ८ वैशाख शुदि २ ।। देंयमर्मोयं परमोपासक महागजपति[2] शङ्कर से-
2. णस्य ।। देयधर्मोयं महाश्रद्धाया: परमोपासिकाया: राजदुहितु: देवश्रृयाया: ।

Translation

This religious gift was donated by Saṅkara Sena (Śaṅkara Sena), a great devotee and chief of the elephant corps.

The pious gift was (also) made by the princess Deva Śriyā, a great devotee and having great faith (in the Buddha).

2. The term *mahāgajapati* is frequently met with in the inscriptions and denotes chief officer of the elephant corps. As is well known, elephants corps constituted an important constituent of the army in ancient India. The term, however, is not met with in the *Rājataraṅgiṇi* of Kalhaṇa.

No. 18. LODU CAVE INSCRIPTION

The village of Lodu situated 17 miles to the east of Srinagar is famous for its ancient cave-temple. Inside the temple is a huge rock on which is incised a brief inscription in two short lines, partly illegible, exact purport of which is difficult to ascertain. The inscription is enshrined in a rectangle to the right of which is another short inscription in two lines.

Text

1. स्थपति (स्थापति) पर पौ
2. त्रे पत्ति......हेरम्भो

Right hand inscription

1. हे तो
2. अपर

Translation

1. Sculptor......
2. ......Lord......Herambha (Gaṇeśa)

No. 19. S.P.S. MUSEUM FRAGMENTARY INSCRIPTION OF THE YEAR 21.

This inscription is engraved on three facets of a lotus shaped pedestal of a cult statue. In the centre of the pedestal is an oblong shaped socket where the tenon of the statuette was fixed. The pedestal measures 1′ 11″ long. 1′ 1″ broad and 5″ thick. It is broken at two front corners and consequently the end of line 1, the beginning and the end of line 2 and the beginning of lines 3-4 are lost. The find spot of the inscription is unknown. It is now preserved in the S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar. The characters are well-cut Śāradā and the language Sanskrit.

The inscription states that in the year 21 on the second lunar day of the month of *Āṣāḍha* in the reign (*rajye l.* 4) of some king whose name unfortunately is not preserved, *griha maṇḍapa* probably a house with a pavilion was constructed at *Tana-rudra-magra* inside (*abhyantare*) the premises of the temple of some deity (the name of the deity is not preserved) and two images were installed to the south *dakṣiṇabhāge* of the shrine. The donor was an ascetic Gagga, son of Vijayakanṭha.

The mention of the place name *Tana-rudra-māgra* is of interest as in it we may have the ancient name of present day Tangamarg, a famous tourist place of the valley.

Text[1]

1. सं २१ आषाढ शुति २ श्री ज[2]......
2. ......वरपादानामभ्यन्तरे टान रुद्रमग्रे गृहंमण्डयं सुदापाक[3]......
3. ......द्वे ५[4] प्रतिमाद्वयं पादानां दक्षणि भागे
4. ......राज्ये तपस्विगग्गेन भट्ट विजय कण्ठ शि(ष्ये)
5. ......न (ण) प्रतिष्ठितम् (।*)

1. From the original.
2. Here we may have the name of the ruling king and the same may be restored as Jayasimha, who ruled over Kashmir from 1128 to 1149 A.D. The year 21 mentioned in the record if referred to Laukika era corresponds to 1145 A.D. which well falls within the reign of the king.
3. The meaning of this expression is not clear.
4. The significance of this numerical figure is also not clear. It is perhaps a mistake for 2 as the preceding and the following expressions would show.

Translation

In the year 21, on the second lunar day of the bright half of Āṣāḍha, by an ascetic Gagga, the disciple of Bhatta Vijaya Kaṇṭha, was got constructed at Tanrudra-marga a house (with a ?) *maṇḍapa* inside the premises of a temple (of some deity) and installed two images to the south of the shrine.

No. 20. WULARHAMA BATH INSCRIPTION

Wularhama is a small village situated 25 km. from Bijbehara on Bijbehara-Pahalgam road in the Anantnag Distt. Here at the entrance of a bath attached to a mosque stands an oblong stone slab measuring 6′ 6″ in length and 2′ 6″ in breadth. It bears an inscription in 13 lines in the Śāradā characters. The inscription begins *thvī-pateḥ* and thus appears to be incomplete. It seems that the present slab contains only the second part of the inscription the first part having been executed on a separate slab now no longer traceable. The frantic search for the same in the locality by the present writer did not yield any fruit.

The inscription is palaeographically important since its characters represent the last phase of the development of the epigraphic Śāradā alphabet. The main palaeographic features have already been discussed above. The language is corrupt Sanskrit and stands in the way of our comprehending the meaning of a part of the inscription.

The inscription appears to record the construction of a sacrificial altar (*vedī*) by a certain lady whose name is not traceable in the text but who is described as proficient in the performance of religious acts and wife of (lit. beloved) of Ritibha described as a king. However, no ruler of this name is known to have ever ruled over Kashmir and he may have seen as such, a local chief or an outsider.[1] The lady is stated to have constructed the altar as per the directions of certain Nirmalakaṇṭha and the guidelines laid down in the *Śāstras* (?). In line 9 we find the expression (*Vraṣka*) perhaps the same as *Vraṣkā* meaning the cutting or preparing the sacrificial post or *yūpa*.[2] The expression is followed by the name of an individual who is described as a *saciva* or minister. It seems that the two inscribed slabs were the *yūpas* or sacrificial posts which recorded and gave details of the performance of the sacrifice by king Ritabha. While the first slab, now lost, seems

1. In the inscriptions of the neighbouring state of Chamba also we find the local chiefs described with the royal titles of *rājā*, *narendra* or *bhūpati*, etc. if. Vogel, *Antiquities*, I, p. 189.
2. Monier Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 1043.

have contained the details of the sacrifice, the second or the present one recorded the other details, *e.g.* names of the individuals who were responsible for making the sacrificial altar and setting up of the sacrificial posts. While the religious minded wife of Ritabha prepared the altar, sacrificial posts were got fashioned and set up by the minister Gamtāra, the son of Sankhyā. The shape of the stone on which our inscription is inscribed supports our conjecture.

In the last three lines we find mention of some Nimmikaṇṭha, the son of Surakaṇṭha, described as *Rājānaka Samadhi* and one to be propitiated or paid homage (*Ārādhyam*). The meaning of the expression *Rājānaka-Samadhi* is uncertain. *Samadhi* is not traceable in the Sanskrit lexicons and does not appear to be a Sanskrit word.[3]

The inscription contains no date and thus we are not in a position to identify any of the individuals or officers mentioned in the record.

At the bottom of the slab separated from the main text by a blank space, we find the name of other individual inscribed as Sri (?) Śavalakaḥ. He may have been the artisan who prepared the stone and engraved the inscription.

Text[4]

1. (पृ:) थ्वी पते: राज
2. श्री रितिभस्य
3. या प्रियतमा ध-
4. र्मेक दक्ष (ा*) तया
5. वेदि न्नि (नि) र्मलक-
6. ण्ठ वाक्य विधि
7. ....ण्यग्रे षि (?) को
8. निर्मिता शब्द शास
9. श्र न (नेन) व्रष्क चात्र (?) सचि
10. वो गम्तार संख्या

3. In the colloquial Hindi *Samadhi* denotes father of son-in-law or daughter-in-law.
4. From the original and the photograph.

11. पुत्रः (।*)
12. आराध्यं राजानक
13. समधि श्री सुरकण्ठ
14. पुत्रः निम्मकण्ठः (।*)

श्री (?) शवलकः

Translation[5]

......who is the beloved (or wife) of the illustrious Ritabha, the lord of the earth, and who is solely proficient in the performance of religious acts, by her was (got) constructed the sacrificial altar (*vedī*) as per the directions (?) (*Vakya Vidhi......*) of Nirmala Kaṇṭha and the guidelines (*Śāsana*) laid down in the *Śāstras* (*Śabda*). The maker of the sacrificial post (*Vraṣka*) here was the minister Gamtāra, the son of Sankhyā.

Homage to the Rājānaka-Samadhi, Nimmikaṇṭha, the son of illustrious Surakaṇṭha.

Bottom

The illustrious (?) Śavalaka.

5. Since the meaning of most of the expressions in the epigraph is uncertain, the translation may be taken as a tentative gist of the inscription.

No. 21. S.P.S. MUSEUM MEMORIAL TABLET INSCRIPTION OF PṚITHVĪGIRI.

This inscription is engraved on a stone slab which contains the figure of a warrior at the upper end. It consists of four short lines written in bold but badly cut Śāradā characters of the 15th and 16th centuries and in corrupt Sanskrit.

The inscription contains the words *Prathavgara sya* (*Pṛithvigireḥ*) *pra* (*pā*)*ṣāṇa*. From this it may be inferred that the stone slab is the memorial tablet of some Pṛithvīgiri and the figure carved at the upper end of the slab above the inscription represents Pṛithvīgiri himself.

The record is dated in the year 54 in the reign of some king whose name has not been correctly recorded. The find spot of the inscription is unknown. It is now preserved in the S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar.

CHAPTER IX

ŚĀRADĀ INSCRIPTIONS OF JAMMU

No. 1 DACCHAN STONE INSCRIPTION OF THE REIGN OF (A) NANTADEVA. (LAUKIKA) YEAR 12, 1036 A.D.

Dacchan is the chief village of the region of the same name situated near Kishtawar in the Doda district of Jammu. Here an inscription incised on a large hard grained granite boulder was discovered by R.C. Kak and subsequently described by him in his *Antiquities of Marev Wadwan*, pp. 24 f.

The inscription is in Śāradā and language is Sanskrit. The chief palaeographic peculiarities have already been discussed above. The epigraph consists of four lines of irregular length and records the construction of a bridge or embankment (*Setu*) by certain Mahimgupta, the resident of Virī. It is dated in the year 12 in the reign of Śrī Nantadeva. This king appears to be identical with the king Ananta who ruled Kashmir from 1028 A.D. to 1063 A.D. The year 12, presumable of the Laukika era corresponds to 1036 A.D. which well falls within the reign of the king. The inscription does not provide any details about the king except the bare mention of his name. The find spot of the inscription would, however, show that Kishtawar lay within his empire. This seems all the more likely since Ananta's conquest of Chamba and Vallapura as recorded by Kalhaṇa[1] could not have been effected without the previous possession of Kishtwar which lay on the direct route to it.

This brief record is specially important as it furnishes evidence of the common man's active participation in the works of public utility even in the remote corners of Kashmir. Thus Mahimagupta of

1. *RT*, vii. 218. Also cf. Bilhaṇa, *Vikram*, xv. iii. 38.

our inscription constructed a bridge obviously for the good of the people of Dacchan. The official named Mahi who designed the bridge is mentioned in the epigraph with the designation *Karmapati*. The *Karmapati* is probably the same as *Navakarmapati* commonly met with in the inscription and signifying an officer in charge of new constructions. In our case, he was probably an overseer or *mistri* to whom the execution of the construction of the bridge was entrusted. The last part of the inscription probably indicates that the inscription was drafted by some one (name not preserved) in the inscription), the son of Lakṣaka.

The place name *Virī* is difficult to identify. R.C. Kak[2] proposes to identify it with Kiar or glen in the immediate vicinity of Dacchan.

Text[3]

1. ओं सं १२ चैत्र शु
2. ति १२ श्री (अ*) न्न (न) न्तदेव राज्ये
3. श्री विरी वास्तव्य महिमगुप्तेन से (?) तु कृते,: (त:)
4. कर्म पति महि चक्रे क्रुते (तं) लक्षक पुत्रे [ण]

Translation

Om. In (Laukika) era 12 on the 12th day of the bright half of Caitra, in the reign of the illustrious Nantadeva, a bridge (?) was constructed by Mahimgupta resident of Viri. Built by the overseer Mahi composed by the son of Lakṣaka.

2. *op. cit.*
3. From the photograph published in Kak's *Antiquities* (*op. cit*).

No. 2. ZAJI-NAI STONE INSCRIPTION

Incised on a small limestone block locally known as Kalpa-Kan "stone of doomsday," this inscription was found by R.C. Kak at the southern extremity of a mountain glen called Zaji-Nai near Wadwan in the Doda district of Jammu.

The stone measures 2′ 3″ in height by 2′ in circumference. The stone is broken into fragments and some fragments are lost. The exact purport of the inscription is, as such, difficult to ascertain. From the mention of such phrases as *aśvapadam pratiṣṭhāpitam aśvagu (O) rakṣa* and from the circumstance that the figure of a horse is cut at the bottom of the stone block, it may be presumed that the inscription records the erection of a stable for the protection of horses and cows (or cattle in general) which were usually sent to the pastures in the mountains for grazing in summer. The donors name is lost but that of his grandfather can be read as Suphalaka.

The record is dated in the reign of some king whose name is not preserved. R.C. Kak records a local tradition according to which the stone was put up by a shepherd in the reign of Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-70 A.D.). The characters which represent the last phase of the development of the Śāradā alphabet confirm the tradition.

The inscription in fragments is preserved in the S.P.S. Museum, Srinagar. It has been described by R.C. Kak in his *Antiquities of Marev Wadwan*, pp. 12-14.

Text

Fragment No. 1

1.......२ श्व व
2.......राजे (ज्ये)

Fragment No. 2 (upper portion)

1.......मया ध-
2. टितं रह

3. लवकेन
4. थुंगक
5. पुत्रेण

Fragment No. 2 (lower portion)

6. वस गु (?)......
7. ......स्तिपलयुदकेन
8. (पु) त्रेण सुफलक पौत्रेण
9. फ अश्वपदं विनय (?)
10. (प्र) तिष्ठापितं अश्व गु (गो) रक्ष......
11. पु......
12. ड्गु......

Fragment No. 3

1. ओ सं २......
2. श्रु
3. द...ह
4. त्रैव
5. स्ति (स्थि) तः

Translation

Fragment No. 2 (upper portion)

Engraved by me, Rahuldaka, son of Thungaka

(Lower portion)

By.........Stipalayudaka (?), son of.........grandson of Suphalaka, was established a stable (literary, place for horses), (for) the protection of horses and cattle...............

CHAPTER X

ŚĀRADĀ INSCRIPTION OF LADAKH

DRAS PILLAR INSCRIPTION

Dras is a small town across the Zojila pass on the Srinagar-Kargil road.

Here an inscription incised on the back of a pillar was found by Sir A. Cunningham on the side of the road between *the hamlet of* Styalbo and the village of Dras. Sir Cunningham later described it in his work *Ladakh*, p. 381, pp. xxx. The inscription has also been referred to by Vigue in his *Travels*, Vol. II, p. 393 and also by Francke in his *History of Western Tibet*, p. 52.

The inscription consists of seven short lines in Śāradā characters. The significant peculiarity is the development of loops or triangles in *k*, *c*, *m*, *s*, similar to those we find in the Tākari of Chamba. Cunningham describes the characters as Kashmiri Tākri. The language is mixture of Sanskrit and the local vernacular which renders the interpretation of the inscription difficult. It contains the mention of the Bodhisattvas, Lokeśvara and Maitreya which seems to be the main point of interest in the epigraph.

The pillar on which our inscription is carved bears figures of a woman (?) and a horseman. From this Cunningham infers that the pillar is a *sati* pillar and the horseman denotes that the husband of the lady commtting *sati* was a soldier. However, Francke quoting the opinion of the Ladakhi's, states that "the figure is not a woman but a plain Maitreya". The mention of Maitreya in the inscription, lends some support to the view of Francke.

Text[1]

1. पृ
2. लोकेश्वरं च । मैत्र......
3. यं प्रतिषृषृत्य (ष्ठित्य ?) श्र ग्र
4. ग्रों भवतु सर्वं सत्वन्व पू (सर्वं सत्वानां पुण्याभिवृद्धये ?)
5. ग्रार्यं ठरन्य कुल मै यु ते
6. ग्रश्वाश्व प्प थ
7. न द्धा
8. द्र ग्र ला

Tentative Translation[2]

Hail to Lokeśvara (?) This statue of Maitreya was installed (for the increase of the religious merit) of all living beings by Ārya Tharanya-Kula who was a horseman (?) (at a place called ?) Dra ala.

1. From the photograph published in Cunningham's *Ladakh*. Cunninham's decipherment is some what different but the letters in the aforesaid photograph are very distinct and do not admit of any variant interpretation. It is not, as such, possible to agree with some of the readings of Cunningham. The text of Cunningham reads as follows :
   1. *Pra.*
   2. *Lokeśvaram ca Maitre.*
   3. *Yam Pratistaptantasram A—*
   4. *Tabhavatumamya matvanvapra.*
   5. *Adatharabha U ((la) maiyatre (ma)*
   6. *Aśvacaptakaye*
   7. *gadra*
   8. *dram ala*
2. The inscription has not been translated by Cunningham.

SECTION III

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

We now give a brief account of the hitherto unedited Śāradā inscriptions which have been referred to by several scholars but which are now either lost or completely defaced or lying in the museums abroad.

KASHMIR

1. *Bijbehara Viṣṇu Image Inscription*

This inscription engraved on the base of a large image of Viṣṇu was discovered by Sten Konow and has been described by him in his *Note on Archaeological work in Kashmir*, p. 15. It consistsof one line and runs *Tvam Namāmi Janārdanam*—"I worship thee Janārdana".

2. *Srinagar Defaced Stone Inscription*

It is referred to by Marshall in his *Note on Archaeological work in Kashmir*, p. 17. It is stated to have been built in the wall of a merchant's house below the second bridge. The inscription is not traceable now.

3. *Srinagar Stone Inscription below the Third Bridge*

This inscription said to be engraved on the stone on the left side of the Jehlum below the 3rd bridge was brought to the notice of John Marshall during his tour of the Valley in 1922. It could not be traced by Marshall, being under the surface of water at the time of his visit. The inscription has never been recovered and its purport remains unknown.

4-6. *Three Fragmentary Stone Incriptions from Khonamuh*

These were found by George Bühler during his tour of the valley in 1875 and have been cursorily described by him in his *Report in Search of Manuscripts in Kashmir and Rajputana*, p. 5. One of them

engraved on the stone slab was found by him at the mouth of a spring at Basmasar situated on the slope of a hill, three hundred feet to the north of Khonamuh. The inscription records the consecration of something in the (Laukika) year 51. It is no longer traceable now.

The other two records are brief votive inscriptions incised on small stone slabs built in the wall of a tank outside the village of Khonamuh. One is dated *sam* 34 and the other *sam* 39. Both are still extant but the writing is in a mutilated condition.

7. *Kotihar Defaced Stone Inscription*

It was found by Bühler (*op. cit.*) at the sacred temple of Kotihar in Baramulla. It was seen incised on a stele shaped stone with most of the lettering obliterated. The preserved portion contained the date *sam* 67.

8-9. *Two Image Inscriptions at Sogam, Lolab*

These were found by Sten Konow during his tour of Kashmir at Sogam in the Lolab valley and have been briefly described by him in *Notes* (*op. cit.*), p. 13. One of the two inscriptions was seen engraved on a small stone containing the image of some god and recorded the consecration of the image in *sam* 54. The other was engraved on the base of an image representing three gods. The inscription was badly mutilated with only few letters left and according to Sten Konow it seemed to have contained a dedication to Īśvara. Both the inscriptions and the images are no longer extant.

10-11. *Stone Inscriptions at Lasityal and Kalarus*

The Lasityal inscription dated *samvat* 54, *vai* (*Vaiśākh*) *śu. ti* 3. is referred to by Vogel in his *Antiquities of Chamba State Part I*, Appendix I, p. 258. It is said to hail from Lasityal 4 miles from Kupwara and 3 miles below Parepur (referred to above) in the Baramulla District. Dr. Vogel, except for the bare mention of the inscription, does note give any detailed particulars of the record. The hamlet of Lasityal was visited by Sten Konow during his tour of

Kashmir in 1908 but he could not find the trace of any inscription there then. On the other hand he was told by the local people about another inscribed stone containing the names of several kings which was once found in the neighbouring village of Kalarus. The record could not be traced by the learned scholar. The enquiries made by the present writer about the same at the site did not yield any fruitful result. The inscription at Lasityal too has long disappeared.

12. *Ushkur Relief Inscription of the Year 82*

This inscription is engraved on the upper left hand portion of a relief which bears the equesterian portrait of a warrior on horse back. It was found at Ushkur near Baramulla by Father de Ruyter of the Church Mission School at Baramulla and is now preserved in the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadalphia, U.S.A.

The authorities of the concerned University were approached by the present writer for a copy of the inscription but unfortunately with no results.

JAMMU

1. *Babor Stone Inscription*

It was noticed by Vogel in a ruined temple at Babor, 17 miles east of Jammu and has been referred to by him in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1907), p. 405. The inscription is completely obliterated and its content and purpose remains unknown.

2. *Kishtwar Linga Stand Inscription*

Incised on a stone *linga* this inscription was noticed by Vogel (*op. cit.*) at Kishtwar (Ancient Kishtwata) in the Doda district of Jammu. Unfortunately, this inscription too like the one noted above is completely defaced.

3-4. *Two Image Inscription from Bhadrawah*

There are mentioned by Vogel in his list of Śāradā inscriptions (*op. cit.*) but none of the two is traceable now. Vogel noticed them

incised on the pedestals of two images, placed in a cave near Bhadrawah (ancient Bhadrāvakāśa) in the Doda district of Jammu.

LADAKH

1. *Maitreya Image Inscription from Drass*

Incised on the pedestal of an image of Bodhisattva Maitreya, this inscription was discovered by Cunningham near the village of Drass in Ladakh. Dated in the 7th year, probably of Laukika era it consisted of fifteen lines nearly obliterated. It has been noticed by Cunningham in his book *Ladakh*, p. 381. The inscription is unfortunately not traceable now.

2. *Sanskrit Inscription in the Hall of Chigtan Monastery*

This inscription incised on the north wall of the Chigtan Monastery near Zanskar in Ladakh was noticed by Francke and has been referred to by him in his *History of Western Tibet*, p. 52. It consists of five lines but the writing is defaced.

APPENDIX 2

In Kashmir where Śāradā has been the alphabet *par excellence*, each vowel and consonant of the alphabet has been given its separate individual name. These names are peculiar to Kashmir and do not seem to be of very early origin. They are not known in other areas where the alphabet has been in use. Most of the names have no definite meaning apart from this connotation and as names of letters do not seem to have been invented on any regular system. Even each syllable of the invocation that usually precedes the alphabet has its own name. Incidentally this tradition of naming the individual letters has been continued in Gurumukhī, the descendant of the Śāradā alphabet.

The names of the individual letters of the alphabet are given in the table below.

KASHMIRI NAMES FOR ŚĀRADĀ CHARACTERS

I. VOWELS

Letters[1]		*Name*			
a	अ	ādau	a	आदौ	अ
ā	आ	aitav	ā	ऐतव	आ
i	इ	yĕyĕv yi[2]	i	ययव	इ
ī	ई	yisherav yi	ī	यिशरव	ई
u	उ	wopal vo	u	वोपल वो	उ
ū	ऊ	wopal bā	ū	वोपल बा	ऊ

1. For equivalent letters of Śāradā see tables above.
2. In Kashmir initial *i* is traditionally pronounced as *yi*, initial *ī* as *yī* and initial *u* as va.

ṛ	ऋ	renav	ṛ	ऋनव	ऋ
ṝ	ॠ	rakhav	ṝ	रखव	ॠ
ḷ	ऌ	leyav	ḷ	ल्ययव	ऌ
ḹ	ॡ	lisav	ḹ	लीसव	ॡ
e	ए	tālavy	e	तालव्य	ए
ai	ऐ	tāli	ai	ताली	ऐ
o	ओ	wutho	o	वुठो	ओ
au	औ	ashidī	au	अशिदी	औ

II. CONSONANTS

ka	क	kov	ka	कोव	क
kha	ख	khăn	kha	खन	ख
ga	ग	gagar	ga	गगर	ग
gha	घ	găsi	gha	गासि	घ
ṅa	ङ	nărug	ṇa	नारुग	ङ
ca	च	Tsāṭav	Tsa (ca)[3]	च़ाटव	च़ (च)
cha	छ	Tshvatin	Tsha (cha)	छ्वटिन	छ़ (छ)
jha	झ	Zăshin	Za (jha)	ज़शिन	ज़ (झ)
ña	ञ	Khvan phuṭi	ñ	ख्वन फुटि	ञ
ṭa	ट	Armān	ṭa	अरमां	ट
ṭha	ठ	Sarmāṇ	ṭha	सरमां	ठ
ḍa	ड	ḍuḍa	ḍa	डुड	ड़
ḍha	ढ	ḍak	dha	डक	ढ
ṅa	ण	nānguri	ṇa	नानगुरि	ण
ta	त	tăv	ta	तव	त
tha	थ	thăji	tha	थाजि	थ
da	द	dadav	da	ददव	द
dha	ध	dūn	dha	दून	ध
na	न	nastav	na	नस्तव	न

3. *Ca* is traditionally pronounced as *Ts*, *Cha* as *Tsh* and *ja* as *za*.

pa	प	paḍări	pa	पड़रि	प
pha	फ	phăriň	pha	फरिञ	फ
ba	ब	bub	ba	बुब	ब
bha	भ	băyi	bha	बयि	भ
ma	म	mov	ma	मोव	म
ya	य	yāv	ya	याव	य
ra	र	raka	ra	रक	र
la	ल	lāv	la	लाव	ल
Va	व	vash	va	वश	व
Śa	श	shakar	śa	शकर	श
Ṣa	ष	phări	ṣa	फारि	ष
Sa	स	sus	sa	सुस	स
ha	ह	hāl	ha	हाल	ह

III. MEDIAL VOWELS

ā	ा	Wahāy	वहाय
kā	का	Kov ka Wahay kā	कोव क वहाय का
i	ि	Mūnthar	मून्थर
ki	कि	Kov ka munthari ki	कोव क मुन्थरि कि
u	ु	khūru	खूरु
ṭu	टु	armant khūri ṭu	अरमांट खूरि टु
ū	ू	Ar khuru	अर् खूरु
ghū	घू	gasi gha ar khuru ghu	गसि घ अर खूरु घू
ṛ	ृ	Same name as for the initial letter	
kṛ	कृ	Kov kahas tal rinav ṛ	कोव कहस तल ऋनव ऋ
ṝ, ḷ,	ॄ, ॢ,	Similarly for ṝ, ḷ, and ḹ	
e	े	Honḍu	ह्वण्डू
ke	के	kov ka hvanjy ke	कोव क ह्वंज्य के
ai	ै	Honjor	ह्वंजोर
kai	कै	kov ka hvanjor kai	कोव क ह्वंजोर कै

o	ो	ok shyur	ग्रोक श्युर
ko	को	kov ka ok shyur ko	कोव क ग्रोकश्युर को
au	ौ	ok shi vahay	ग्रोक शि वहाय
kou	कौ	Kov ka ok shi wahay kau	कोव क ग्रोकुशि वहाय कौ

IV. LIGATURES

In ligatures the preposition *tal* (below) is added to the upper consonant which is put in genitive.

kka	क्क	Kov kahas tal kov ka	कोव कह्स तल कोव क
kta	क्त	kov kahas tal tăv ta	कोव कह्स तल तव त
jña	ज्ञ	tzayi tzahas tal	ज़यि ज़हस तल
		Khvan phuṭi ña	ख्वन फुटि ञा

When *ya* is the second member of a ligature it is named *śutarikh*. For example.

Kya	क्य	Kov ka śutarikh kya	कोव क शूतरिख क्य

when *ra* is the second member of a ligature it is named *dutarikh*. For example :

Kra	क्र	Kov ka dutarikh kra	कोव क दूतरिख क्र

V. INVOCATORY SYLLABLES

om	ग्रों	Omkārā om	ग्रोंकारा ग्रों
sva	स्व	soyam so	स्वयं सो
sti	स्ति	tëvis te	त्यविस ते
ekam	एकं	aku sam gor	ग्रकू सं गोर
Si	सि	Sediv se	स्यदिव से
ddham	द्धं	damar dam	दमर दं

VI. VISARGA, ANUNASIKA AND AVAGRAHA

ḥ	:	do pheri aḥ	दो फ्यरि ग्रः
ṁ	ँ	aḍi Tsandra phyor	ग्रडि चन्द्र फ्योर
	ऽ	a oḍay ādau a	ग्रोडुय ग्रादौ ग्र

APPENDIX 3

THE LAUKIKA (SAPTARṢHĪ) ERA

The inscriptions represented in this corpus are all dated in Laukika or the Saptarṣī era. Though this era is nowhere specifically mentioned in our records there can be hardly any doubt that the era represents the Laukika era, also called the Saptarṣī or the Śāstra era, an era of Kashmir *par excellence* and widely prevalent in North Western India. The era has been used by Kalhaṇa to reckon his chronology and has been used widely in the Śāradā epigraphic records found in Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and West Pakistan. A peculiar feature of this era is that the century is never given and this makes the era highly unsatisfactory for chronological purposes. It is only by internal evidence as, *e.g.*, the mention of the name of the ruling king, or mention of the date in some other era as well, that the century of the era can be found out. A survey of the dates of our records would how that they generally testify the correctness of the chronology given by Kalhaṇa and this fact considerably enhances the historical value of the Kalhaṇa's text.

A datailed treatment of the Laukika era has so admirably been given by A. Cunningham in his *Book of Indian Eras*, pp. 6-17, Sewell and Dikshit, *The Indian Calender*, p. 41, Keilhorn, A Note on the Saptarshi Era, *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. 20, pp. 149 ff, G. Bühler, *Report*, pp. 59 ff, Vogel, *Antiquities of Chamba State*, Vol. I, pp. 69 ff, Bhandarkar, *Report on Sanskrit Manuscripts* for 1883-84, pp. 84 ff.; and Gauri Shanker Hirachand Ojha, *Bhāratīya Prācīna Lipimālā*, p. 84 f.

The commencement of the Laukika era is placed in *Caitra Śudi I* of Kali *Samvat* 25 (expired) or the year B.C. 3076-75 This is indicated by several records as also by the Khonamuh Inscription of

Jayanolabadena Shah represented in this corpus and by the following verse.

कलेर्गतै : सायकनेत्र वर्षै: सप्तर्षिवर्यस्त्रिविदं प्रयात: ।
लोके हि सम्वत्सर पत्रिकायां सप्तर्षिमानं प्रवदन्ति सन्त : ॥

"When the Kaliyuga years denoted by the arrow and the eyes (25) had passed, the Saptarṣi era started. For in the Calender in use the virtuous declare the computation of the Saptarṣī era to begin from that point". The beginning of the Kaliyuga era is dated back to B.C. 3101-2 which among other records is indicated by our Khonamuh inscription as well where the Kali year 4530 corresponds to Laukika 4505 and 1428 A.D. which makes B.C. 3102 as the starting point of the Kali era and 3076 as the starting point of the Laukika era.

In his note on the Saptarṣī era Prof. Keilhorn points out that disregarding the hundreds we must add 25 to the year of a date in that era to find the corresponding expired year within one of the centuries of the Kaliyuga; 46 to find similarly the corresponding expired Śaka era, 81 to find the corresponding expired Vikram era, and 24-25 to find the corresponding year of the Christian era. This is well illustrated by an inscription in the Chamba town which is dated Vikram *samvat* 1717, Saka *samvat* 1582, Śāstra (Laukika) *samvat* 36, *Vaiśākha Va ti* 13 Wednesday, *Meṣa Saṁkrānti* corresponding to 28th March, 1660 A.D.

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